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Ain't Nature Wonderful!

By EDNA FERBER

Edna Ferber.



WHEN a child grows to boyhood, and a boy to manhood under the soul-searing blight of a given name like Florian, one of two things must follow. He will degenerate into a weakling, crushed beneath the inevitable diminutive—Flossie; or he will build up painfully, inch by inch, a barrier against the name's corroding action. He will boast of his biceps, flexing them the while. He will brag about cold baths. He will prate of chest measurements; regard golf with contempt; and speak of the West as God's country.

Florian Sykes was five feet three and a half, and he liked to quote those red-blooded virile poems about the big open spaces out where the West begins. The biggest open space in his experience was Madison Square, New York; and Eighth Avenue spelled the Far West for him. When Florian spoke or thought of great heights it was never in terms of nature, such as mountains, but in artificial ones, like skyscrapers. Yet his job depended on what he called the great outdoors.

The call of the wild, by the time it had filtered into his city abode, was only a feeble cheep. But he answered it daily from his rooms to the store in the morning, from the store to his rooms in the evening. It must have been fully ten blocks each way. There are twenty New York blocks to the mile. He threw out his legs a good deal when he walked and came down with his feet rather flat, and he stooped ever so little with the easy slouch that came in with the one-button sack suit. It's the walk you see used by English actors of the what-what school who come over here to play gentlemanly juveniles.

Down at Inverness & Heath's they called him Nature's Rival, but that was mostly jealousy, with a strong dash of resentment. Two of the men in his department had been Maine guides, and another boasted that he knew the Rockies as he knew the palm of his hand. But Florian, whose trail-finding had all been done in the subway shuttle, and who thought that butter sauce with parsley was a trout's natural element, had been promoted above their heads half a

dozen times until now he lorded it over the fifth floor.

Not one of you, unless bedridden from birth, but has felt the influence of the firm of Inverness & Heath. You may never have seen the great establishment itself, rising story on story just off New York's main shopping thoroughfare. But you have felt the call of their catalogue. Surely at one time or another, they have supplied you with tents or talcum; with sleeping-bags or skis or skates; with rubber boots, or resin or reels. On their fourth floor you can be hatted for Palm Beach or booted for Skagway. On the third, outfitted for St. Moritz or San Antonio. But the fifth floor is the pride of the store. There is the camper's dream realized. There you will find man's most ingenious devices for softening Mother Nature's flinty bosom. Mosquito-proof tents; pads that will not leak; fleece-lined sleeping-bags; cooking outfits made up of pots and pans of every size, each shaped to disappear mysteriously into the next, like a conjurer's outfit, the whole swallowed up by a magic leather case.

Here Florian reigned. If you were a regular Inverness & Heath customer you learned to ask for him as soon as the elevator tossed you up to his domain. He met you with what is known in the business efficiency guides as the strong personality greeting. It consisted in clapping your hand with a grip that drove your ring into the bone, looking you straight in the eye, registering alert magnetic force, and pronouncing your name very distinctly. Like this: hand-clasp firm—straight in the eye—"How do you do, Mr. Outertown. Haven't seen you since last June. How was the trip?" He didn't mean to be a liar. And yet he lied daily and magnificently for years to the world and himself. When, for example, in the course of purchasing rods, flies, tents, canoes, saddles, boots, or sleeping-bags of him, you spoke of the delights of your contemplated vacation, he would say, "That's the life. I'm a Western man, myself. . . . God's country!" He said it with a deep breath, and an exhalation, as one who pants to be free of the city's noisome fumes. You felt he must have been born with an equipment of chaps, quirts, spurs, and sombrero. You see him flinging himself on a horse and clattering off with a flirt of hoofs as they do it in the movies. His very manner sketched in a background of plains, mountains, six-shooters, and cacti.

The truth of it was Florian Sykes had

been born in Kenosha, Wisconsin. At the age of three he had been brought to New York by a pair of inexperienced and migratory parents. Their reasons for migrating need not concern us. They must, indeed, have been bad reasons. For Florian, at thirteen, a spindle-legged errand-boy in over-size knickers, a cold sore on his lip, and shoes chronically in need of resoling, had started to work for the great sporting goods store of Inverness & Heath.

Now, at twenty-nine, he was head of the fifth floor. The cold sore had vanished permanently under a régime of health-food, dumb-bells, and icy plunges. The shoes were bench-made and flawless. If the legs still were somewhat spindling their correctly creased casings hid the fact.

There's little doubt that if Florian had been named Bill, and if the calves of his legs had bulged, and, if, in his youth, he had gone to work for a wholesale grocer, he would never have forged for himself a coat of mail whose links were pretense and whose bolts were shame. He probably would have been frankly content with the sight of an occasional ball-game out at the Polo Grounds, and the newspaper bulletins of a prizefight by rounds. But here he was at the base that supplied America's outdoor equipment. He who outfitted mountaineers must speak knowingly of glaciers, chasms, crevices, and peaks. He who advised canoeists must assume wisdom of paddles, rapids, currents, and portages. He whose sleeping hours were spangled with the clang of the street cars must counsel such hardy ones as were preparing cheerfully to seek rest rolled in blankets before a camp-fire's dying embers. And so, slowly, year by year, in his rise from errand to stock boy, from stock boy to clerk, from clerk to assistant manager, thence to his present official position, he had built about himself a tissue of innocent lies. He actually believed them himself.

Some times a customer who in June had come in to purchase his vacation supplies with the city pallor upon him, returned in September, brown, hard, energized, to thank Florian for the comfort of the outfit supplied him.

"I just want to tell you, Sykes, that that was a great little outfit you sold me. Yessir! Not a thing too much, and not a thing too little, either. Remember how I kicked about that air mattress? Well, say, it saved my life! I slept like a baby every night. And the trip! You've been there, haven't you?"

Florian would smile and nod his head. His grateful customer would clap him on the shoulder. "Some pebble, that mountain!"

"Get to the top?" Florian would ask.

"Well, we didn't do the peak. That is, not right to the top. Started to a couple of times, but the girls got tired, and we didn't want to leave 'em alone. Pretty stiff climb, let me tell you, young feller."

"You should have made the top."

"Been up, have you?"

"A dozen times."

"Oh, well, that's your business, you might say. Next time, maybe, we'll do it. The missus says she wants to go back there every year."

Florian would shake his head. "Oh, you don't want to do that. Have you been out to Glacier? Have you done the Yellowstone on horseback? Ever been down the Grand Canyon?"

"Why—no—but——"

"You've got a few thrills coming to you then."

The sunburned traveler would flush mahogany. "That's all right for you to say. But I'm no chamois. But it was a great trip, just the same. I want to thank you."

Then, for example, Florian's clothes. He had adopted that careful looseness—that ease of fit—that skilful sloppiness—which is the last word in masculine sartorial smartness. In talking he dropped his final g's and said "sportin'" and "mountain climbin'" and "shootin'." From June until September he wore those Norfolk things with bow ties, and his shirt patterns were restrained to the point of austerity. A signet ring with a large scrolled monogram on the third finger of his right hand was his only ornament, and he had worn a wrist watch long before the War. He had never seen a mountain. The ocean meant Coney Island. He breakfasted at Child's. He spent two hours over the Sunday papers. He was a Tittlebat Titmouse without the whiskers. And Myra loved him.

If Florian had not pretended to be something he wasn't; and if he had not professed an enthusiastic knowledge of things of which he was ignorant, he would, in the natural course of events, have loved Myra quickly in return. In fact, he would have admitted that he had loved her first, and desperately. And there would have been no story entitled, "Ain't Nature Wonderful!"

Myra worked in the women's and misses', third floor, and she didn't care a thing about the big outdoors or the great open

spaces. She didn't even pretend to—at first. A clear-eyed, white-throated, capable young woman, almost poignantly pretty. You sensed it was the kind of loveliness that fades a bit with marriage. In its place come two sturdy babies to carry on the torch of beauty. You sensed, too, that Myra would keep their noses wiped, their knees scrubbed, and their buttons buttoned and that, between a fresh blouse for herself and fresh rompers for them, the blouse would always lose.

She hated discomfort, did Myra, as does one who has always had too much of it. After you have stood all day, from 8:30 A. M. to 5:30 P. M., selling sweaters, riding togs, golf clothes, and trotteurs to athletic Dianas whose lines are more lathe than lithe, you can't work up much enthusiasm about exercising for the pure joy of it. Myra had never used a tennis-racket in her life, but daily she outfitted for the sport bronzed young ladies who packed a nasty back-hand wallop in their right. She wore (and was justly proud of) a 4-A shoe, and took a good deal of comfort in the fact as she sold 7-Cs at \$22.50 a pair to behemothian damsels who possessed money in proportion to Myra's beauty. Myra was the only girl in her section who never tried to dress in imitation of the moneyed ones whom she served. The other girls were wont to wear severely tailored shirts, mannish ties, stocks, flat-heeled shoes, rough tweed skirts. Not so Myra. That delicate cuplike hollow at the base of her white throat was fittingly framed in a ruffle of frilly georgette. She did her hair in soft undulations that flowed away from forehead and temple, and she powdered her nose a hundred times a day. Her little shoes were high-heeled and her hands were miraculously white, and if you prefer Rosalind to Viola you'd better quit her now.

"Anybody who wants to wear those cross-country clothes is welcome to them," she said. "I'm a girl and I'm satisfied to be. I don't see why I should wear a hard-boiled shirt and a necktie any more than a man should wear a pink georgette trimmed with filet. By the end of the week, when I've spent six solid days selling men's clothes to women, I feel's if I'd die happy if I could take a milk bath and put on white satin and pearls and a train six yards long from the shoulders—you know."

Not the least of Myra's charm was a certain unexpected and pleasing humour. It was as though, on opening a chocolate box, you were to find it contained caviar.

Of course by now you know that Myra is the girl you used to see smiling out at you from the Inverness & Heath catalogue entitled Sportswomen's Apparel. The head of her department had soon discovered that Myra, posing for illustrations to be used in the spring booklet, raised that pamphlet's selling power about 100 per cent. Sun-burned misses, with wind-ravaged complexions, gazing at the picture of Myra, cool, slim, luscious-looking, saw themselves as they would fain be—and bought the Knollwood sweater depicted—in silk or wool—putty, maize, navy, rose, copen, or white—\$35. Myra posed in paddock coat and breeches—she who had never been nearer a horse than the distance between sidewalk and road. She smiled at you over her shoulder radiant in a white tricot Palm Beach suit, who thought palms grew in jardinières only. On page 17 she was revealed in the boyish impudence of our Aiken Polo Habit, complete, \$90. She was ravishing in her golf clothes, her small feet in sturdy, flat-heeled boots planted far apart, and only the most carping would have commented on the utter impossibility of her stance. Then there was the Killiecrankie Travel Tog (background of assorted mountains) made of Scotch tweed (she would never come nearer Scotland than oatmeal for breakfast), only \$140. To say nothing of motor clothes, woodland suits, trap-shooting costumes, Yellowstone Park outfits, hunting habits. She wore brogues, and boots, and skating shoes, and puttees and tennis ties; sou'westers, leather top-coats, Jersey silks, military capes. You saw her fishing, hunting, boating, riding, golfing, snow-shoeing, swimming. She was equally lovely in khaki with woolen stockings, or in a habit of white linen and the shiniest of riding-boots. And as she peeled off the one to put on the next she remarked wearily, "A kimono and felt slippers and my hair down my back will look pretty good to me to-night, after this."

You see, Myra and Florian really had so much in common that if he had been honest with himself the course of their love would have run too smooth to be true. But Florian, in his effort to register as a two-fisted, hard-riding, nature-taming male, made such a success of it that for a long time he deceived even Myra who loved him. And during that time she, too, lied in her frantic effort to match her step with his. When he talked of riding and swimming; of long, hard mountain hikes; of impenetrable woods, she looked at him

with sparkling eyes. (She didn't need to throw much effort into that, nature having supplied her with the ground materials.) When, on their rare Sundays together, he suggested a long tramp up the Palisades she agreed enthusiastically, though she hated it. Not only that, she went, loathing it. The stones hurt her feet. Her slender ankles ached. The sun burned her delicate skin. The wind pierced her thin coat. Florian strode along with the exaggerated step of the short man who bitterly resents his lack of stature. Every now and then he stood still, and breathed deeply, and said, "Glorious!" And Myra looked at his straight back, and his clear-cut profile, and his well-dressed legs and said, "Isn't it!" and wished he would kiss her. But he never did.

In between times he bemoaned his miserable two weeks' vacation which made impossible the sort of thing he said he craved—a long, hard, rough trip into a mountain interior. The Rockies, preferably, in their jaggedest portions.

"That's the kind of thing that makes a fellow over. Roughing it. You forget about the city. In the saddle all day—nothing but sky and mountains. God's big open spaces! That's the life!"

Myra trudged along, painfully. "But isn't it awfully uncomfortable? You know. Cold? And tents? I don't think I'd like——"

"I wouldn't give a cent for a person who was so soft they couldn't stand roughing it a little. That's the trouble with you Easterners. Soft! No red blood. Too many street cars, and high buildings, and restaurants. Chop down a few trees and fry your own bacon, and make your own camp, and saddle your own horses—that's what I call living. I'm going back to it some day, see if I don't."

Myra looked down at her own delicate wrists, with the blue veins so exquisitely etched against the white flesh. A little look of terror and hopelessness came into her eyes.

"I—I couldn't chop down a tree," she said. She was panting a little in keeping up with him, for he was walking very fast. "I'd be afraid to saddle a horse. You have to stand right next to them, don't you? Most girls can't chop——"

Florian smiled a little superior smile. "Miss Jessie Heath can." Myra looked up at him, quickly. "She's a wonder! She was in yesterday," he went on. "Spent all of two hours up in my department,

looking things over. There's nothing she can't do. She won a blue ribbon at the Horse Show in February. Saddle. She's climbed every peak that amounts to anything in Europe. Did the Alps when she was a little girl. This summer she's going to do the Rockies, because things are so mussed up in Europe, she says. I'm selecting the outfit for the party. Gad, what a trip!" He sighed, deeply.

Myra was silent. She was not ungenerous toward women, as are so many pretty girls. But she was human, after all, and she did love this Florian, and Jessie Heath was old man Heath's daughter. Whenever she came into the store she created a little furore among the clerks. Myra could not resist a tiny flash of claws.

"She's flat, like a man. And she wears 7½-C. And her face looks as if it had been rubbed with a scouring brick."

"She's a goddess!" said Florian, striding along. Myra laughed, a little high hysterical laugh. Then she bit her lip, and then she was silent for a long time. He was silent, too, until suddenly he heard a little sound that made him turn quickly to look at her stumbling along at his side. And she was crying.

"Why—what's the matter! What's!—"

"I'm tired," sobbed Myra, and sank in a little limp heap on a convenient rock. "I'm tired. I want to go home."

"Why"—he was plainly bewildered—"why didn't you tell me you were tired!"

"I'm telling you now."

They took the nearest ferry across the river, and the Subway home. At the entrance to the noisy, crowded flat in which she lived Myra turned to face him. She was through with pretense. She was tired of make-believe. She felt a certain relief in the thought of what she had to say. She faced him squarely.

"I've lived in the city all my life and I'm crazy about it. I love it. I like to walk in the park a little maybe, Sundays, but I hate tramping like we did this afternoon, and you might as well know it. I wouldn't chop down a tree, not if I was freezing to death, and I'd hate to have to sleep in a tent, so there! I hate sunburn, and freckles, and ants in the pie, and blisters on my feet, and getting wet, and flat-heeled shoes, and I never saddled a horse. I'd be afraid to. And what's more, I don't believe you do, either."

"Don't believe I do what?" asked Florian in a stunned kind of voice.

But Myra had turned and left him.

And as he stood there, aghast, bewildered, resentful, clear and fair in the back of his mind, against all the turmoil of thoughts that seethed there, was the picture of her white, slim, exquisite throat with a little delicate pulse beating in it as she cried out her rebellion. He wished—or some one inside him that he could not control wished—that he could put his fingers there on her throat, gently.

It was very warm that evening, for May. And as he sat by the window in his pajamas, just before going to bed, he thought about Myra, and he thought about himself. But when he thought about himself he slammed the door on what he saw. Florian's rooms were in Lexington Avenue in the old brownstone district that used to be the home of white-headed millionaires with gold-headed canes, who, on dying, left their millions to an Alger newsboy who had once helped them across the street. Millionaires, gold-headed canes, and newsboys had long vanished, and the old brownstone fronts were rooming houses now, interspersed with delicatessens, interior decorators, and dressmaking establishments. Florian was fond of boasting when he came down to the store in the morning, after a hot, muggy July night, "My place is like a summer resort. Breeze just sweeps through it. I have to have the covers on."

Sometimes Mrs. Pet, his landlady, made him a pitcher of lemonade and brought it up to him, and he sipped it, looking out over the city, soothed by its roar, fascinated by its glow and brilliance. Mrs. Pet said it was a pleasure to have him around, he was so neat.

Florian was neat. Not only neat, but methodical. He had the same breakfast every week-day morning at Childs'; half a grapefruit, one three-minute egg, coffee, rolls. On Sunday morning he had bacon and eggs. It was almost automatic. Speaking of automatics, he never took his meals at one of those modern mechanical feeders. Though at Childs' he never really beheld the waitress with his seeing eye, he liked to have her slap his dishes down before him with a genial crash. A gentleman has his little foibles, and being waited on at meal-time was one of his. Occasionally, to prove to himself that he wasn't one of those fogies who get in a rut, he ordered wheat cakes with maple syrup for breakfast. They always disagreed with him.

She was a wise young woman, Myra.

Perhaps Florian, as he sat by his window

that Sunday night of Myra's outburst, thought on these things. But he would not admit to himself whither his thinking led. And presently he turned back the spread, neatly, and turned out the light, and opened the window a little wider, and felt of his chin, as men do, though the next shave is eight hours distant, and slept, and did not dream of white throats as he had secretly hoped he would.

And next morning, at eleven, a very wonderful thing began to happen. Next morning, at eleven, Miss Jessie Heath loped (well, it can't be helped. That describes it exactly) into the broad aisles of the fifth floor. She had been coming in a great deal, lately. The Western trip, no doubt.

Descriptions of people are clumsy things, at best, and stop one's story. But Jessie Heath must have her paragraph. A half-dozen lines ought to do it. Well—she was the kind of girl who always goes around with a couple of Airedales, and in woolen stockings, low shoes and mannish shirts, and shell-rimmed glasses, and you felt she wore Ferris waists. Her hair was that ashen blonde with no glint of gold in it. You knew it would become gray in middle age with no definite period of transition. She never buttoned her heavy welted gloves but wore them back over her hand, like a cuff, very English. You felt there must be a riding crop concealed about her somewhere. Perhaps up her spine.

As has been said, there was always a little flurry when she came into the big store that had made millions for her father. It would be nonsense to suppose that Jessie Heath ever deliberately set out to attract a man who was an employee in that store. But it is pleasant and soothing to be admired, and to have a fine pair of eyes look fine things into one's own (shell-rimmed) ones. And, after all, the Jessie Heaths of this world are walked with, and golfed with, and ridden with, and tennised with, and told that they're wonderful pals. But it's the Myras that are made love to. So now, when Florian Sykes looked at her, and flushed a little, and said, "I suppose there are a lot of lucky ones going along with you on this trip, Miss—Jessie," she flushed, too, and flicked her boot with her riding crop—No, no! I forgot. She didn't have a riding crop. Well, anyway she gave the effect of flicking her boot with her riding crop, and said:

"Would you like to go?"

"Would I like to go—!" He choked

over it. Then he sighed, and smiled rather wistfully. "That's needlessly cruel of you, Miss Jessie."

"Maybe it's not so cruel as you think," Jessie Heath answered. "Did you make out that list?"

"I spent practically all of yesterday on it." Which we know was a lie because, look, wasn't he with Myra?

They went over the list together. Fishing tackle, tents, pocket-flashes, puttees, ponchos, chocolate, quirts, slickers, matches, medicine-case, sweaters, cooking utensils, blankets. It grew longer, and longer. Their heads came close together over it. And they trailed from department to department, laughing and talking together. And the two Maine ex-guides and the clerk who boasted he knew the Rockies like the palm of his hand, said to one another, "Get on to Nature's Rival trying to make a hit with Jessie."

Meanwhile Jessie was saying, "Of course you know the Rockies, being a Western man, and all."

Florian smiled rather deprecatingly. "Queer part of it is I don't know the Rockies so well—" with an emphasis on the word Rockies that led one to think his more noteworthy feats of altitude had been accomplished about the Alps, the Pyrenees, the Andes, and the lesser Appalachians.

"But you've climbed them, haven't you?"

He burned his bridges behind him. "Only the—ah—eastern slopes."

"Oh, that's all right, then. We're going to do the west. It'll be wonderful having you—"

"Me!"

"Nothing. Let's go on with the list. M-m-m—where were we? Oh, yes. Now trout flies. Which do you honestly think best for mountain trout? The Silver Doctor or the Gray Hackle or the Yellow Professor? U'm?"

Inspiration comes to us at such times. It could have been nothing less that prompted him to say, "Well—doesn't that depend a lot on the weather and the depth of the—ahem!—water?"

"Yes, of course. How silly of me. We'll take a lot of all kinds, and then we'll be safe."

He breathed again and smiled. He had a winning smile, Florian. Jessie Heath smiled in return and they stood there, the two of them, lips parted, eyes holding eyes.

"My God!" said the man who boasted he knew the Rockies like the palm of his own

hand, "it looks as if he'd landed her, the stiff."

Certainly it looked as if he had. For next morning old Heath, red-faced, genial-looking (and not so genial as he looked) approached the head of the fifth floor and said, "How long you been with us, Sykes?"

"Well, I came here as errand boy at thirteen. That's ten—twelve—fifteen—just about sixteen years next June. Yes, sir."

"How'd Jessie—how'd my daughter get the idea you were from the West, and a regular mountain goat, and a peak-climber and all that?"

He did look a little uncomfortable then, but it was too late for withdrawal. "I am from the West, you know."

"Have you had any long vacations since you've been with us?"

"No, sir. You see, in the summer, of course—our busy season, I never can get away then. So I've taken my two weeks in the fall."

Old Heath's eyes narrowed musingly. "Well, you couldn't have done all this mountain climbing before you were thirteen. And Jessie says—" He paused, rather blankly. "You say you do know the Rockies, though, eh?"

Florian drew himself up a little. "As well as I know any mountains."

"Oh, well, then, that's all right. Seems Jessie thinks you'd be a fine fellow to have along on this trip. I can't go myself. I hate this mountain climbing, anyway. Too darned hard work. But it's all right for young folks. Well, now, what do you say? Want to go? You've earned a vacation, after sixteen years. There's about eight in Jessie's crowd. Not counting guides. What do you say? Like to go?"

For a dazed moment Florian stared at him. "Why, yessir. Yes, sir, I'd—I'd like to go—very much." And he coughed to hide his joy and terror.

And two weeks later he went.

The thing swept the store like a flame. In an hour every one knew it from the shipping-room to the roof-restaurant. Myra saw him the day he left. She was game, that girl.

"I hope you're going to have a beautiful time, Mr. Sykes."

"Thanks, Myra." He could afford to be lenient with her, poor little girl.

She ventured a final wretched word or two. "It's—it's wonderful of Mr. Heath and—Miss Heath—isn't it?" She was rubbing salt into her own wound and taking a fierce sort of joy in it.

"Wonderful! Say, they're a couple of God's green footstools, that's what they are!" He was a little mixed, but very much in earnest. "A couple of God's green footstools." And he went.

He went, and Myra watched him go, and except for a little swelling gulp in her white throat you'd never have known she'd been hit. He was going with Jessie Heath. Now, Myra had no illusions about those things. Old man Heath's wife, now dead, had been a girl with no money and no looks, and yet he had married her. If Jessie Heath happened to take a fancy to Florian, why—

Myra's little world stood still, and in it were small voices, far away, asking for 6½-B; and have you it in brown, and other unimportant things like that.

Ten minutes after the train had started Florian Sykes knew he shouldn't have come. He had suspected it before. He kept saying to himself, over and over: "You've always wanted a mountain trip, and now you're going to have it. You're a lucky guy, that's what you are. A lucky guy." But in his heart he knew he was lying.

In the first place, they were all so glib with their altitudes, and their packs, and their trails, and their horses and their camps. It was a rather mixed and raggle-taggle group that Miss Jessie Heath had gathered about her for this expedition to the West. They ranged all the way from a little fluffy witless golden-haired girl they all called Mud, for some obscure reason, and who had been Miss Heath's room-mate at college, surprisingly enough, to a lady of stern and rock-bound countenance who looked like a stage chaperon made up for the part. She was Miss Heath's companion in lieu of Mrs. Heath, deceased. In between there were a couple of men of Florian's age; two youngsters of twenty-one or two who talked of Harvard and asked Florian what his university had been; an old girl whose name Florian never did learn; and two others of Jessie Heath's age and general style. Florian found himself as bewildered by their talk and views as though they had been jabbering a foreign language. Every now and then, though, one of them would turn to him for a bit of technical advice. If it happened to concern equipment Florian could answer it readily enough. Ten years on the fifth floor had taught him many things. But if the knowledge sought happened to be of things geographical or of nature, he floundered, struggled, sank. And it took them

just about half a day to learn this. The trip out takes four, from New York.

At first they asked him things to see him suffer. But they tired of that, after a bit. It was too easy. Queerly enough, Jessie Heath, mountain-wise though she was, believed in him almost to the end. But that only made the next three weeks the bitterer for Florian Sykes. For when it came to leaping from peak to peak Jessie turned out to be the young gazelle. And she liked to have Florian with her. On the trail she was a mosquito afoot, a jockey ahorseback. A thousand times, in those three weeks of torture, he would fix his eye on a tree ten feet away, up the steep trail. And to himself he would say, "I'll struggle, somehow, as far as that tree, and then die under it." And he would stagger another ten feet, his heart pounding in the unaccustomed altitude, his lungs bursting, his lips parted, his breath coming sobbingly, his eyes starting from his head. Leaping lightly ahead of him, around the bend, was Jessie, always. She had a way of calling to the laggard—hallooing, I believe it's supposed to be. And she expected an answer. An answer! When your lungs were bursting through your chest and your heart was crowding your tonsils. When he reached her it was always to find her perched on a seemingly inaccessible rock, demanding that he join her to admire the view. Before three days had gone by the sound of that halloo, with its breeziness and breath-control and power, made him sick all over. Sometimes she sang, going up the trail. He could not have croaked a note if failure to do it had meant instant death. The Harvard hellions (it is his own term) were indefatigable, simian, pitiless. At nine thousand feet they aimed at ten. At ten they would have nothing less than twelve. At twelve thousand they were all for making another drive for it and having lunch at an altitude of thirteen thousand five hundred. As he toiled painfully along hundreds of feet behind them, Florian used to take a hideous pleasure in fancying how, on reaching the ever-distant top, the Harvard hellions would be missing. And after searching and hallooing he would peer over the edge (13,500 feet, at the very least, surely) and there, at the bottom, would discern their mangled forms, distorted, crushed, and quite, quite dead.

"Yoo-o-o—hoo-oo-oo-oo!" Jessie, up the trail. His rosy dream would vanish.

He learned why seasoned mountain climbers make nothing of the ascent. He

learned, in bitterness and unshed tears, that it is the descent that breaks the heart and shatters the already broken frame. That down-climb with your toes crashing through your boots at every step; with your knee-brakes refusing to work, your thighs creaking, your joints spavined. The views were wonderful. But, oh, the price he paid! The air was intoxicating. But what, he asked himself, was wine to a dead man! Miserable little cockney that he was, he told himself a hundred times a day that if he ever survived this he'd never look at another view again, unless from the Woolworth Tower, on a calm day. He thought of New York as a traveller, dying of thirst in the desert, thinks of the lush green oasis. New York in July! Dear New York in July, its furs in storage, its collar unstarched, its coat unbuttoned; even its doormen and chauffeurs almost human. Would he ever see it again? And then, as if in answer to his question, there befell an incident so harrowing, so nerve-shattering, as almost to make a negative answer seem inevitable.

Florian got lost.

It was the third week of the trip. Florian had answered Jessie's eleven thousandth question about things of which he was quite, quite ignorant. His brain felt queer and tight, as though something were about to snap.

They were to climb the Peak next day. All that day they had been approaching it. Florian looked at it. And he hated it. It was like a colossal forbidding finger pointing upward, upward, taunting him, menacing him. He wished that some huge cataclysm of nature would occur, swallowing up this hideous mass of pitiless rock.

Jessie Heath's none too classic nose had peeled long ere this and her neck was like a choice cut of underdone beefsteak. Florian told himself that there was something almost indecent about a girl who cared so little about her skin, and hair, and eyes, and hands. He actually hated her sturdy legs in their boots or puttees—those tireless, pitiless legs, always twinkling ahead of him, up the trail.

On the fateful day he was tired. He had often been tired to the point of desperation during the past three weeks. But this was different. Every step was torture. Every breath was pain. Jessie was a few hundred feet up the trail, as always, and hallooing to him every dozen paces. The Harvard hellions were doing the chamois ahead of her. The rest of the party were trailing

along behind. One guide was just ahead. Another, leading two horses, bringing up the rear. Suddenly, desperately, Florian knew he must rest. He would fling himself on a bed of moss by the side of the trail, in the shade, near a stunted, wind-tortured timber-line pine, and let the whole procession pass him, and then catch up with them before they disappeared.

He stepped to the side of the narrow trail, almost indiscernible at this height, flung himself down with a little groan of relief, and shut his sun-seared eyes. The voices of the others came to him. There was little conversation. He heard Jessie's accursed halloo. Then the soft thud of the pack-horses' hoofs, the creak of the saddles. He must get up and follow now. In a minute. In a minute. In a m——

He must have slept there for two hours. When he awoke the light had changed and the air was chill. He sat up, bewildered. He rose. He looked about, called, hallooed, shouted, did all the futile frenzied things that a city man does who is lost in the mountains, and, knowing he is lost, is panic-stricken. The trail, of course! He looked for it, and there was no trail, to his town-wise eyes. He ran hither and thither, and back to hither again. He went forward, seemingly, and found himself back whence he started. He looked for cairns, for tree-blazes, for any one of the signs of which he had learned in the last three weeks. He found none. He called again, shrilly. A terror seized him. Terror of those grim, menacing, towering mountain masses. He ran round and round and round; darted backward and forward; called; stumbled; fell, and subsided, beaten.

He had a tiny box of matches with him, but little else. He had found the trail difficult enough without being pack-burdened. Food? He bethought himself of a little blue tin box in his coat pocket. He took it out and looked at it. Its very name struck terror to his heart.

U. S. Emergency Ration. It was printed on the box. Just below that he made out:

Powdered sugar.
Chocolate.
Cocoa butter.
Malted milk.
Egg Albumin.
Casein.

Not to be opened except on command of officer.

My God! He had come to this! He looked at it, wide-eyed. He was very hungry. The ration, in its blue tin, like a box of shaving talcum, had been handed to

each of the party in a chorus of shouting and laughter. And now it was to save his life. He managed to pry open the box, and ate some of its contents, slowly. It was not agreeable.

Dusk was coming on. There were mountain lions, he knew that. Those rocks and crevices were peopled with all sorts of stealthy, snarling, slinking, four-footed creatures. He would build a fire. They were afraid of the flames, he had read somewhere, and would not come near. Perhaps the others would see the light, and come back to find him. Curse them! Why hadn't they come before now!

It was dusk by the time he had his fire built. He had crouched over it for a half-hour, blowing it, coaxing it, wheedling it. There were few twigs or sticks at this height. He was very cold. His heavy sweater was in the pack on the horse's back. Finally he was rewarded with a feeble flicker, a tiny tongue of flame. He rose from his knees and passed his hand over his forehead with a gesture of utter weariness and despair. And then he stared, transfixed. For on the plateau above him rose a great shaft of fire. The kind of fire that only Pete, the most expert among guides, could build. And as he stared there burst out at him from behind trees, rocks, crevices, a whole horde of imps shrieking with fiendish laughter.

"Ho, ho," laughed Jessie.

And "Ha, ha!" howled the Harvard hellions.

"Thought you were lost, didn'tcha?"

"Gosh, you looked funny!"

"Your face!——"

Florian stared at them. He did not smile. He went quietly over to his tiny camp-fire and stamped it out, neatly, as he had been taught to do. He took his can of emergency ration (not to be opened except on command of officer) and hurled it far, far down the mountainside. Jessie Heath laughed, contemptuously. And Florian, looking at her, didn't care. Didn't care. Didn't care.

The nightmare was over in August. Over, that is, for Florian. The rest were to do another four weeks of it, farther into the interior. Florian sickened at the thought of it. When he bade them farewell he was so glad to be free of them that he almost loved them. When he found himself actually on the little jerkwater train that was to connect him with the main line he patted the dusty red plush seat, gratefully, as one would stroke a faithful beast. When

he came into the Grand Central station he would have stooped and kissed the steps of the marble staircase if his porter had not been on the point of vanishing with his bags. That night on reaching home he stayed in the bathtub for an hour, just lying there in the warm, soothing liquid, only moving to dapple his fingers now and then as a lazy fish moves a languid fin. God's country! This was it.

"My, it's nice to have you back again, Mr. Sykes," said Mrs. Pet.

"Is your big two-room suite on the next floor vacant?" said Florian, cryptically.

Mrs. Pet stared a little, wonderingly. "Yes, that's vacant since the Ostranders left, in July. Why do you ask, Mr. Sykes?"

"Nothing," Florian answered, airily. "Not a thing. Just asked."

His train had come in at nine. It was eleven now, but he was restless, and a little hungry, and very much exhilarated. "You certainly look grand," Mrs. Pet had exclaimed, admiringly. "And my, how you're sunburned!"

He left the Lexington Avenue house, now, and strolled over to the near-by white-tiled restaurant. There, in the window, was the white-capped one, flapping pancakes. Florian could have kissed him. He sat down. A waitress approached him.

"I don't know," mused Florian. "I'm sort of hungry, but I don't just——"

"The pork and beans are elegant to-night," suggested the girl.

And "Pork and beans! NO!" thundered Florian.

The girl drew herself up icily. "I ain't deaf. You don't need to yell."

Florian looked up at her contritely, and smiled his winning smile. "I'm sorry. I didn't mean—I—I never want to see beans again as long as I live!"

He was down at the store early, early next morning. His practised eye swept the department for possible slackness, for changes, for needed adjustments. The two Maine ex-guides and the chap who knew the Rockies like the palm of his hand welcomed him with Judas-like slaps on the shoulder. "Like it?" they asked him. And, "God's country—the West," he answered mechanically. After that he ignored them. At nine he ran down the two flights of stairs to the third floor. He did not wait for the elevator.

For a moment he could not find her and his heart sank. She might be away on a vacation. Then he spied her in a corner half-hidden by a rack of covert coats. She was hanging them up. The floor was empty of customers thus early. He strode over to her. She turned. Into her eyes there leaped a look which she quickly veiled as had been taught her by a thousand female ancestors.

"I got your postals," she said.

Florian said nothing.

"My, you're brown!"

Florian said nothing.

"Did you—have a good time?"

Florian said nothing.

"What—what—" Her hand went to her throat, where his eyes were fastened.

Then Florian spoke. "How white your throat is!" he said. "How white your throat is!"

Myra stepped out, then, from among the covert coats on the rack. Her head was lifted high on the creamy column that supported it. She had her pride, had Myra.

"It's no whiter than it was a month ago, that I can see."

"I know it." His tone was humble, with a little pleading note in it. "I know a lot of things that I didn't know a month ago, Myra."



Upon Himself

By ROBERT HERRICK

I DISLIKE but even now;
Now I love I know not how.
Was I idle, and that while
Was I fier'd with a smile?
He too work, or pray; and then
I shall quite dislike agen.

Col. Brereton's Aunty

By
H. C. BUNNER



THE pleasant smell of freshly turned garden-mould and of young growing things came in through the open window of the Justice of the Peace. His insturiums were spreading, pale and weedy—I could distinguish their strange, acrid scent from the odour of the rest of the young vegetation. The tips of the morning-glory vines, already up their strings to the height of a man's head, curled around the window-frame, and beckoned to me to come out and rejoice with them in the freshness of the mild June day. It was pleasant enough inside the Justice's front parlour, with its bright ingrain carpet, its gilt clock, and its marble-topped center-table. But the Justice and the five gentlemen who were paying him a business call—although it was Sunday morning—looked, the whole half-dozen of them, ill in accord with the spirit of the Spring day. The Justice looked annoyed. The five assembled gentlemen looked stern. "Well, as you say," remarked the fat little Justice, who was an Irishman, "if this divilment goes on—"

"It's not a question of going on, Mr. O'Brien," broke in Alfred Winthrop; "it has gone on too long."

Alfred is a little inclined to be arrogant with the unwinthropian world; and, moreover, he was rushing the season in a very grand suit of white flannels. He looked rather too much of a lord of creation for a democratic community. Antagonism lit the Justice's eye.

"I'm afraid we've got to do it, O'Brien," I interposed, hastily. The Justice and I are strong political allies. He was mollified.

"Well, well," he assented; "let's have him up and see what he's got to say for himself. Mikel!" he shouted out the window; "bring up Colonel Brereton!"

Colonel Brereton had appeared in our village about a year before that Sunday. Why he came, whence he came, he never deigned to say. But he made no secret of the fact that he was an unreconstructed Southron. He had a little money when he arrived—enough to buy a tiny one-story house on the outskirts of the town. By vocation he was a lawyer, and, somehow or other, he managed to pick up enough to

support him in his avocation, which, we soon found out, was that of village drunkard. In this capacity he was a glorious, picturesque and startling success. Saturated with cheap whiskey, he sat all day long in the barroom or on the porch of the village groggery, discoursing to the neighbourhood loafers of the days before the wah, when he had a vast plantation in "Virginia."

—"and five hundred niggers, seh." So long as the Colonel's excesses threatened only his own liver, no one interfered with him. But on the night before we called upon the Justice, the Colonel, having brooded long over his wrongs at the hands of the Yankees, decided to enter his a reservoir of cocktails, decided to enter his a protest against the whole system of free coloured labour by cutting the liver out of every negro in the town; and he had slightly lacerated Winthrop's mulatto coachman before a delegation of citizens fell upon him, and finding him unwilling to relinquish his plan, placed him for the night in the lock-up in Squire O'Brien's cellar.

We waited for the Colonel. From under our feet suddenly arose a sound of scuffling and smothered imprecations. A minute later, Mike, the herculean son of the Justice, appeared in the doorway, bearing a very small man hugged to his breast as a baby hugs a doll.

"Let me down, seh!" shouted the Colonel. Mike set him down, and he marched proudly into the room, and seated himself with dignity and firmness on the extreme edge of a chair.

The Colonel was very small indeed for a man of so much dignity. He could not have been more than five foot one or two; he was slender—but his figure was shapely and supple. He was unquestionably a handsome man, with fine, thin features and an aquiline profile—like a miniature Henry Clay. His hair was snow-white—prematurely, no doubt—and at the first glance you thought he was clean shaven. Then you saw that there was scarcely a hair on his cheeks, and that only the finest imaginable line of snowy white moustaches curled down his upper lip. His skin was smooth as a baby's and of the colour of old ivory. His teeth, which he was just

then exhibiting in a sardonic smile, were white, small, even. But if he was small, his carriage was large, and military. There was something military, too, about his attire. He wore a high collar, a long blue frock coat, and tight, light-gray trousers with straps. That is, the coat had once been blue, the trousers once light-gray, but they were now of many tints and tones, and, at that exact moment, they had here and there certain peculiar light lights of whitewash.

The Colonel did not wait to be arraigned. Sweeping his black, piercing eye over our little group, he arraigned *us*.

"Well, gentlemen," with keen irony in his tone, "I reckon you think you've done a right smart thing, getting the Southern gentleman in a hole? A pro-dee-gious fine thing, I reckon, since it's kept you away from chu'ch. *Baptis'* church, I believe?" This was to poor Canfield, who was suspected of having been of that communion in his youth, and of being much ashamed of it after his marriage to an aristocratic Episcopalian. "Nice Sunday mo'ning to worry a Southern gentleman! Gentleman who's owned a plantation that you could stick this hyeh picayune town into one co'neh of! Owned mo' nigghehs than you evah saw. Robbed of his land and his nigghehs by you Yankee gentlemen. Drinks a little wine to make him fo'get what he's suffehed. Gets ovehtaken. Tries to avenge an insult to his honah. Put him in a felon's cell and whitewash his gyarments. And now you come hyeh—you come hyeh—" here his eye fell with deep disapproval upon Winthrop's white flannels—"you come hyeh in youh underclothes, and you want to have him held fo' Special Sessions."

"You are mistaken, Colonel Brereton," Winthrop interposed; "if we can have your promise—"

"I will promise you nothing, seh!" thundered the Colonel, who had a voice like a church-organ, whenever he chose to use it; "I will make no conventions with you! I will put no restrictions on my right to defend my honah. Put me in youh felon's cell. I will rot in youh infehnal dungeons; but I will make no conventions with you. You can put me in striped breeches, but you cyan't put my honah in striped breeches!"

"That settles it," said the Justice.

"And all," continued the Colonel, oratorically, "and all this hyeh fuss and neglect of youh religious duties, fo' one of the cheapest and most o'nerly nigghehs I evah laid eyes on.

Why, I wouldn't have given one hundred dollahs fo' that niggeh befo' the wah. No, seh, I give you my wo'd, that niggeh ain't wo'th ninety dollahs!"

"Mike!" said the Justice, significantly. The Colonel arose promptly, to insure a voluntary exit. He bowed low to Winthrop.

"Allow me to hope, seh," he said, "that you won't catch cold." And with one lofty and comprehensive salute he marched haughtily back to his dungeon, followed by the towering Mike.

The Justice sighed. An elective judiciary has its trials, like the rest of us. It is hard to commit a voter of your own party for Special Sessions. However—"I'll drive him over to Court in the morning," said the little Justice.

I was sitting on my verandah that afternoon, reading. Hearing my name softly spoken, I looked up and saw the largest and oldest negress I had ever met. She was at least six feet tall, well-built but not fat, full black, with carefully dressed gray hair. I knew at once from her neat dress, her well-trained manner, the easy deference of the curtsy she dropped me, that she belonged to the class that used to be known as "house darkeys"—in contradistinction to the field hands.

"I understand, seh," she said, in a gentle, low voice, "that you gentlemen have got Cunnle Bre'ton jailed?"

She had evidently been brought up among educated Southerners, for her grammar was good and her pronunciation correct, according to Southern standards. Only once or twice did she drop into negro talk.

I assented.

"How much will it be, seh, to get him out?" She produced a fat roll of twenty and fifty dollar bills. "I do fo' Cunnle Bre'ton," she explained: "I have always done fo' him. I was his Mammy when he was a baby."

I made her sit down—when she did there was modest deprecation in her attitude—and I tried to explain the situation to her.

"You may go surety for Colonel Brereton," I said; "but he is certain to repeat the offense."

"No, seh," she replied, in her quiet, firm tone; "the Cunnle won't make any trouble when I'm here to do fo' him."

"You were one of his slaves?"

"No, seh. Cunnle Bre'ton neveh had any slaves, seh. His father, Majah Bre'ton, he had slaves one time, I guess, but when the Cunnle was bo'n, he was playing kyards fo' a living, and he had only me. When the

Cunne's mother died, Majah Bre'ton he went to Mizzoura, and he put the baby in my ahms, and he said to me, 'Sabrine,' he sez, 'you do fo' him.' And I've done fo' him evah since. Sometimes he gets away from me, and then he gets kind o' wild. He was in Sandusky a year, and in Chillicothe six months, and he was in Tiffin once, and one time in a place in the state of Massachusetts—I disremembah the name. This is the longest time he evah got away from me. But I always find him, and then he's all right."

"But you have to deal with a violent man."

"The Cunne won't be violent with me, seh."

"But you're getting old, Auntie—how old?"

"I kind o' lost count since I was seventy-one, seh. But I'm right spry, yet."

"Well, my good woman," I said, decisively, "I can't take the responsibility of letting the Colonel go at large unless you give me some better guarantee of your ability to restrain him. What means have you of keeping him in hand?"

She hesitated a long time, smoothing the folds of her neat alpaca skirt with her strong hands. Then she said:

"Well, seh, I wouldn't have you say anything about it, fo' feah of huthing Cunne Bre'ton's feelings; but when he gets that way, I jes' nachully tuh'n him up and spank him. I've done it evah since he was a baby," she continued apologetically, "and it's the only way. But you won't say anything about it, seh? The Cunne's powerful sensitive."

I wrote a brief note to the Justice. I do not know what legal formalities he dispensed with; but that afternoon the Colonel was free. Aunt Sabrine took him home, and he went to bed for two days while she washed his clothes. The next week he appeared in a complete new outfit—in cut and colour the counterpart of its predecessor.

* * * *

Here began a new era for the Colonel. He was no longer the town drunkard. Aunt Sabrine "allowanced" him—one cocktail in the "mo'ning"; a "ho'n" at noon, and one at night. On this diet he was a model of temperance. If occasionally he essayed a drinking bout, Aunt Sabrine came after him at eve, and led him home. From my window I sometimes saw the steady big figure and the wavering little one going home over the crest of the hill,

equally black in their silhouettes against the sunset sky.

What happened to the Colonel we knew not. No man saw him for two days. Then he emerged with unruffled dignity. The two always maintained genuine Southern relations. He called her his damn black nigger—and would have killed any man who spoke ill of her. She treated him with the humble and deferential familiarity of a "mammy" toward "young mahse."

For herself, Aunt Sabrine won the hearts of the town. She was an ideal washerwoman, an able temporary cook in domestic *interregna*, a tender and wise nurse, and a genius at jam and jellies. The Colonel, too, made money in his line, and put it faithfully into the common fund.

In March of the next year, I was one of a Reform Town Council, elected to oust the usual local ring. We discharged the inefficient Town Counsel, who had neglected our interests in a lot of suits brought by swindling road-contractors. Aunt Sabrine came to me, and solemnly nominated Colonel Brereton for the post. "He is sho'ly a fine loyyeh," she said.

I know not whether it was the Great American sense of humour, or the Great American sense of fairness, but we engaged the Colonel, conditionally.

He was a positive, a marvelous, and incredible success, and he won every suit. Perhaps he did not know much law; but he was the man of men for country judges and juries. Nothing like his eloquence had ever before been heard in the county. He argued, he cajoled, he threatened, he pleaded, he thundered, he exploded, he confused, he blazed, he fairly dazzled—for silence stunned you when the Colonel ceased to speak, as the lightning blinds your eyes long after it has vanished.

The Colonel was utterly incapable of seeing any but his own side of the case. I remember a few of his remarks concerning Finnegan, the contractor, who was suing for \$31.27 payments withheld.

"Fohty yahds!" the Colonel roared: "fohty yahds! This hyeh man Finnegan, this hyeh cock-a-doodle-doo, he goes along this hyeh road, and he casts his eye oveh this hyeh excavation, and he comes hyeh and sweahs it's fohty yahds good measure. Does he take a tape measure and measure it? NO! Does he even pace it off with those hyeh corkscrew legs of his that he's trying to hide under his chaiah? NO!! He says, 'I'm Finnegan, and this hyeh's fohty yahds,' and off he sashays up the hill,

wondering wheah Finnegan's going to bring up when he's walked off the topmost peak of the snowclad Himalayas of human omniscience! And this hyeh man, this hyeh insult to humanity in a papeh collah, he comes hyeh, to this august tribunal, and he asks you, gentlemen of the jury, to let him rob you of the money you have earned in the sweat of youh brows, to take the bread out of the mouths of the children whom youh patient and devoted wives have bohne to you in pain and anguish—but I say to you, *gentel-men—(suddenly exploding)* HIS PAPEH COLLAH SHALL ROAST IN HADES BEFO' I WILL BE A PAHTY TO THIS HYEH INFAMY!"

Finnegan was found in hiding in his cellar when his counsel came to tell him that he could not collect his \$31.27. "Be-dad, is *that* all?" he gasped: "I 'tought I'd get six mont's."

People flocked from miles about to hear the Colonel. Recalcitrant jurymen were bribed to service by the promise of a Brereton case on the docket. His performances were regarded in the light of a free show, and a verdict in his favour was looked upon as a graceful gratuity.

He made money—and he gave it meekly to Auntie Sabrine.

* * *

It was the night of the great blizzard; but there was no sign of cold or wind when I looked out, half-an-hour after midnight, before closing my front door. I heard the drip of water from the trees, I saw a faint mist rising from the melting snow. At the foot of my lawn I dimly saw the Colonel's familiar figure marching homeward from some political meeting preliminary to Tuesday's election. His form was erect, his step steady. He swung his little cane and whistled as he walked. I was proud of the Colonel.

An hour later the storm was upon us. By noon of Monday, Alfred Winthrop's house, two hundred yards away, might as well have been two thousand, so far as getting to it, or even seeing it, was concerned. Tuesday morning the snow had stopped, and we looked out over a still and shining deluge with sparkling fringes above the blue hollows of its frozen waves. Across it roared an icy wind, bearing almost invisible diamond dust to fill irritated eyes and throats. The election was held that day. The result was to be expected. All the "hard" citizens were at the polls. Most of the reformers were stalled in railroad trains. The Reform Ticket failed of

re-election, and Colonel Brereton's term of office was practically at an end.

I was outdoors most of the day, and that night, when I awoke about three o'clock, suddenly and with a shock, thinking I had heard Auntie Sabrine's voice crying: "Cun-*nle!* wheah are you, Cun*nle?*" my exhausted brain took it for the echo of a dream. I must have dozed for an hour before I sprang up with a certainty in my mind that I had heard her voice in very truth. Then I hurried on my clothes, and ran to Alfred Winthrop's. He looked incredulous; but he got into his boots like a man. We found Auntie Sabrine, alive but unconscious, on the crest of the hill. When we had secured an asylum for her, we searched for the Colonel. The next day we learned that he had heard the news of the election and had boarded a snow-clearing train that was returning to the Junction.

It was a week before Auntie Sabrine recovered. When I asked her if she was going to look for the Colonel, she answered with gentle resignation:

"No, seh. I'm 'most too old. I'll stay hyeh, wheah he knows wheah to find me. He'll come afteh me, sho'."

* * *

Sixteen months passed, and he did not come. Then, one evening, a Summer walk took me by the little house. I heard a voice I could not forget.

"Hyeh, you black niggeh, get along with that suppeh, or I come in theah and cut youh damn haid off!"

Looking up, I saw Colonel Brereton, a little the worse for wear, seated on the snake fence. No . . . he was not seated; he was hitched on by the crook of his knees, his toes braced against the inside of the lower rail. His coat-tails hung in the vacant air.

He descended, a little stiffly, I thought, and greeted me cordially, with affable dignity. His manner somehow implied that it was I who had been away.

He insisted on my coming into his front yard and sitting down on the bench by the house, while he condescendingly and courteously inquired after the health of his old friends and neighbours. I stayed until supper was announced. The Colonel was always the soul of hospitality; but on this occasion he did not ask me to join him. And I reflected, as I went away, that although he had punctiliously insisted on my sitting down, the Colonel had remained standing during our somewhat protracted conversation.

The Two-Gun Man

By STEWART EDWARD WHITE

Stewart Edward White

I. THE CATTLE RUSTLERS

BUCK JOHNSON was American born, but with a black beard and a dignity of manner that had earned him the title of Señor. He had drifted into southeastern Arizona in the days of Cochise and Victorio and Geronimo. He had persisted, and so in time had come to control the water—and hence the grazing—of nearly all the Soda Springs Valley. His troubles were many, and his difficulties great. There were the ordinary problems of lean and dry years. There were also the extraordinary problems of devastating Apaches; rivals for early and ill-defined range rights—and cattle rustlers.

Señor Buck Johnson was a man of capacity, courage, directness of method, and perseverance. Especially the latter. Therefore he had survived to see the Apaches subdued, the range rights adjusted, his cattle increased to thousands, grazing the area of a principality. Now, all the energy and fire of his frontiersman's nature he had turned to wiping out the third uncertainty of an uncertain business. He found it a task of some magnitude.

For Señor Buck Johnson lived just north of that terra incognita filled with the mystery of a double chance of death from man or the flaming desert known as the Mexican border. There, by natural gravitation, gathered all the desperate characters of three States and two republics. He who rode into it took good care that no one should ride behind him, lived warily, slept light, and breathed deep when once he had again sighted the familiar peaks of Cochise's Stronghold. No one professed knowledge of those who dwelt therein. They moved, mysterious as the desert illusions that compassed them about. As you rode, the ranges of mountains visibly changed form, the monstrous, snaky, sea-like growths of

the cactus clutched at your stirrup, mock lakes sparkled and dissolved in the middle distance, the sun beat hot and merciless, the powdered dry alkali beat hotly and mercilessly back—and strange, grim men, swarthy, bearded, heavily armed, with red-rimmed unshifting eyes, rode silently out of the mists of illusion to look on you steadily, and then to ride silently back into the desert haze. They might be only the herders of the gaunt cattle, or again they might belong to the Lost Legion that peopled the country. All you could know was that of the men who entered in, but few returned.

Directly north of this unknown land you encountered parallel fences running across the country. They enclosed nothing, but offered a check to the cattle drifting toward the clutch of the renegades, and an obstacle to swift, dashing forays.

Of cattle-rustling there are various forms. The boldest consist quite simply of running off a bunch of stock, hustling it over the Mexican line, and there selling it to some of the big Sonora ranch owners. Generally this sort means war. Also are there subtler means, grading in skill from the rebranding through a wet blanket, through the crafty refashioning of a brand to the various methods of separating the cow from her unbranded calf. In the course of his task Señor Buck Johnson would have to do with them all, but at present he existed in a state of warfare, fighting an enemy who stole as the Indians used to steal.

Already he had fought two pitched battles, and had won them both. His cattle increased, and he became rich. Nevertheless he knew that constantly his resources were being drained. Time and again he and his new Texas foreman, Jed Parker, had followed the trail of a stampeded bunch of twenty or thirty, followed them on down through the Soda Springs Valley to the cut drift fences, there to

abandon them. For, as yet, an armed force would be needed to penetrate the borderland. Once he and his men had experienced the glory of a night pursuit. Then, at the drift fences, he had fought one of his battles. But it was impossible adequately to patrol all parts of a range bigger than some Eastern States.

Buck Johnson did his best, but it was like stopping with sand the innumerable little leaks of a dam. Did his riders watch toward the Chiricahuas, then a score of beef steers disappeared from Grant's Pass forty miles away. Pursuit here meant leaving cattle unguarded there. It was useless, and the Señor soon perceived that sooner or later he must strike in offense.

For this purpose he began slowly to strengthen the forces of his riders. Men were coming in from Texas. They were good men, addicted to the grass-robe, the double cinch, and the ox-bow stirrup. Señor Johnson wanted men who could shoot, and he got them.

"Jed," said Señor Johnson to his foreman, "the next son of a gun that rustles any of our cows is sure loading himself full of trouble. We'll hit his trail and will stay with it, and we'll reach his cattle-rustling conscience with a rope."

So it came about that a little army crossed the drift fences and entered the border country. Two days later it came out, and mighty pleased to be able to do so. The rope had not been used.

The reason for the defeat was quite simple. The thief had run his cattle through the lava beds where the trail at once became difficult to follow. This delayed the pursuing party; they ran out of water, and, as there was among them not one man well enough acquainted with the country to know where to find more, they had to return.

"No use, Buck," said Jed. "We'd any of us come in on a gun play, but we can't buck the desert. We'll have to get someone who knows the country."

"That's all right—but where?" queried Johnson.

"There's Perez," suggested Parker. "It's the only town down near that country."

"Might get someone there," agreed the Señor.

Next day he rode away in search of a guide. The third evening he was back again, much discouraged.

"The country's no good," he explained. "The regular inhabitants 're a set of Mexican bums and old soaks. The cowmen's all

from north and don't know nothing more than we do. I found lots who claimed to know that country, but when I told 'em what I wanted they shied like a colt. I couldn't hire 'em, for no money, to go down in that country. They ain't got the nerve. I took two days to her, too, and rode out to a ranch where they said a man lived who knew all about it down there. Nary raffle. Man looked all right, but his tail went down like the rest when I told him what we wanted. Seemed plumb scairt to death. Says he lives too close to the gang. Says they'd wipe him out sure if he done it. Seemed plumb scairt." Buck Johnson grinned. "I told him so and he got hostile right off. Didn't seem no ways scairt of me. I don't know what's the matter with that outfit down there. They're plumb terrorized."

That night a bunch of steers was stolen from the very corrals of the home ranch. The home ranch was far north, near Fort Sherman itself, and so had always been considered immune from attack. Consequently these steers were very fine ones.

For the first time Buck Johnson lost his head and his dignity. He ordered the horses.

"I'm going to follow that — into Sonora," he shouted to Jed Parker. "This thing's got to stop!"

"You can't make her, Buck," objected the foreman. "You'll get held up by the desert, and, if that don't finish you, they'll tangle you up in all those little mountains down there, and ambush you, and massacre you. You know it damn well."

"I don't give a —," exploded Señor Johnson, "if they do. No man can slap my face and not get a run for it."

Jed Parker communed with himself.

"Señor," said he, at last, "it's no good; you can't do it. You got to have a guide. You wait three days and I'll get you one."

"You can't do it," insisted the Señor. "I tried every man in the district."

"Will you wait three days?" repeated the foreman.

Johnson pulled loose his latigo. His first anger had cooled.

"All right," he agreed, "and you can say for me that I'll pay five thousand dollars in gold and give all the men and horses he needs to the man who has the nerve to get back that bunch of cattle, and bring in the man who rustled them. I'll sure make this a test case."

So Jed Parker set out to discover his man with nerve.

II. THE MAN WITH NERVE

At about ten o'clock of the Fourth of July a rider topped the summit of the last swell of land, and loped his animal down into the single street of Perez. The buildings on either side were flat-roofed and coated with plaster. Over the sidewalks extended wooden awnings, beneath which opened very wide doors into the coolness of saloons. Each of these places ran a bar, and also games of roulette, faro, craps, and stud poker. Even this early in the morning every game was patronized.

The day was already hot with the dry, breathless, but exhilarating, heat of the desert. A throng of men idling at the edge of the sidewalks, jostling up and down their center, or eddying into the places of amusement, acknowledged the power of summer by loosening their collars, carrying their coats on their arms. They were as yet busily engaged in recognizing acquaintances. Later they would drink freely and gamble, and perhaps fight. Toward all but those whom they recognized they preserved an attitude of potential suspicion, for here were gathered the "bad men" of the border countries. A certain jealousy or touchy egotism lest the other man be considered quicker on the trigger, bolder, more aggressive than himself, kept each strung to tension. An occasional shot attracted little notice. Men in the cow-countries shoot as casually as we strike matches, and some subtle instinct told them that the reports were harmless.

As the rider entered the one street, however, a more definite cause of excitement drew the loose population toward the center of the road. Immediately their mass blotted out what had interested them. Curiosity attracted the saunterers; then in turn the frequenters of the bars and gambling games. In a very few moments the barkeepers, gamblers, and look-out men, held aloof only by the necessities of their calling, alone of all the population of Perez were not included in the newly-formed ring.

The stranger pushed his horse resolutely to the outer edge of the crowd where, from his point of vantage, he could easily overlook their heads. He was a quiet-appearing young fellow, rather neatly dressed in the border costume, rode a "center fire," or single-cinch, saddle, and wore no chaps. He was what is known as a "two-gun man": that is to say, he wore a heavy Colt's revolver on either hip. The fact that the lower ends of his holsters were tied down, in

order to facilitate the easy withdrawal of the revolvers, seemed to indicate that he expected to use them. He had furthermore a quiet gray eye, with the glint of steel that bore out the inference of the tied holsters.

The newcomer dropped his reins on his pony's neck, eased himself to an attitude of attention, and looked down gravely on what was taking place.

He saw over the heads of the bystanders a tall, muscular, wild-eyed man, hatless, his hair rumped into staring confusion, his right sleeve rolled to his shoulder, a wicked-looking nine-inch knife in his hand, and a red bandana handkerchief hanging by one corner from his teeth.

"What's biting the locoed stranger?" the young man inquired of his neighbour.

The other frowned at him darkly.

"Dare's anyone to take the other end of that handkerchief in his teeth, and fight it out without letting go."

"Nice joyful proposition," commented the young man.

He settled himself to closer attention. The wild-eyed man was talking rapidly. What he said can not be printed here. Mainly was it derogatory of the southern countries. Shortly it became boastful of the northern, and then of the man who uttered it. He swaggered up and down, becoming always the more insolent as his challenge remained untaken.

"Why don't you take him up?" inquired the young man, after a moment.

"Not me!" negatived the other vigorously. "I'll go yore little old gunfight to a finish, but I don't want any cold steel in mine. Ugh! it gives me the shivers. It's a reg'lar Mexican trick! With a gun it's down and out, but this knife work is too slow and searchin'."

The newcomer said nothing, but fixed his eye again on the raging man with the knife.

"Don't you reckon he's bluffing?" he inquired.

"Not any!" denied the other with emphasis. "He's jest drunk enough to be crazy mad."

The newcomer shrugged his shoulders and cast his glance searchingly over the fringe of the crowd. It rested on a Mexican.

"Hi, Tony! come here," he called.

The Mexican approached, flashing his white teeth.

"Here," said the stranger, "lend me your knife a minute."

The Mexican, anticipating sport of his own peculiar kind, obeyed with alacrity.

"You fellows make me tired," observed the stranger, dismounting. "He's got the whole townful of you bluffed to a standstill. Damn if I don't try his little game."

He hung his coat on his saddle, shouldered his way through the press, which parted for him readily, and picked up the other corner of the handkerchief.

"Now, you mangy son of a gun," said he.

III. THE AGREEMENT

JED PARKER straightened his back, rolled up the bandana handkerchief, and thrust it into his pocket, hit flat with his hand the touselled mass of his hair, and thrust the long hunting knife into its sheath.

"You're the man I want," said he.

Instantly the two-gun man had jerked loose his weapons and was covering the foreman.

"Am I!" he snarled.

"Not jest that way," explained Parker. "My gun is on my hoss, and you can have this old toad-sticker if you want it. I been looking for you and took this way of finding you. Now, let's go talk."

The stranger looked him in the eye for nearly a half minute without lowering his revolvers.

"I go you," said he briefly, at last.

But the crowd, missing the purport, and in fact the very occurrence of this colloquy, did not understand. It thought the bluff had been called, and naturally, finding harmless what had intimidated it, gave way to an exasperated impulse to get even.

"You — — bluffer!" shouted a voice, "don't you think you can run any such ranikaboo here!"

Jed Parker turned humorously to his companion.

"Do we get that talk?" he inquired gently.

For answer the two-gun man turned and walked steadily in the direction of the man who had shouted. The latter's hand strayed uncertainly toward his own weapon, but the movement paused when the stranger's clear, steel eye rested on it.

"This gentleman," pointed out the two-gun man softly, "is an old friend of mine. Don't you get to calling of him names."

His eyes swept the bystanders calmly.

"Come on, Jack," said he addressing Parker.

On the outskirts he encountered the Mexican from whom he had borrowed the knife.

"Here, Tony," said he with a slight laugh, "here's a *peso*. You'll find your knife back there where I had to drop her."

He entered a saloon, nodded to the proprietor, and led the way through it to a box-like room containing a board table and two chairs.

"Make good," he commanded briefly.

"I'm looking for a man with nerve," explained Parker, with equal succinctness.

"You're the man."

"Well?"

"Do you know the country south of here?"

The stranger's eyes narrowed.

"Proceed," said he.

"I'm foreman of the Lazy Y of Soda Springs Valley range," explained Parker. "I'm looking for a man with sand enough and *sabe* of the country enough to lead a posse after cattle-rustlers into the border country."

"I live in this country," admitted the stranger.

"So do plenty of others, but their eyes stick out like two raw oysters when you mention the border country. Will you tackle it?"

"What's the proposition?"

"Come and see the old man. He'll put it to you."

They mounted their horses and rode the rest of the day. The desert compassed them about, marvellously changing shape and colour, and every character, with all the noiselessness of phantasmagoria. At evening the desert stars shone steady and unwinking, like the flames of candles. By moonrise they came to the home ranch.

The buildings and corrals lay dark and silent against the moonlight that made of the plain a sea of mist. The two men unsaddled their horses and turned them loose in the wire-fenced "pasture," the necessary noises of their movements sounding sharp and clear against the velvet hush of the night. After a moment they walked stiffly past the sheds and cook shanty, past the men's bunk houses, and the tall windmill silhouetted against the sky, to the main building of the home ranch under its great cottonwoods. There a light still burned, for this was the third day, and Buck Johnson awaited his foreman.

Jed Parker pushed in without ceremony.

"Here's your man, Buck," said he.

The stranger had stepped inside and carefully closed the door behind him. The lamplight threw into relief the bold, free lines of his face, the details of his costume

powdered thick with alkali, the shiny butts of the two guns in their open holsters tied at the bottom. Equally it defined the resolute countenance of Buck Johnson turned up in inquiry. The two men examined each other—and liked each other at once.

"How are you," greeted the cattleman.

"Good-evening," responded the stranger.

"Sit down," invited Buck Johnson.

The stranger perched gingerly on the edge of a chair, with an appearance less of embarrassment than of habitual alertness.

"You'll take the job?" inquired the Señor.

"I haven't heard what it is," replied the stranger.

"Parker here—?"

"Said you'd explain."

"Very well," said Buck Johnson. He paused a moment, collecting his thoughts. "There's too much cattle-rustling here. I'm going to stop it. I've got good men here ready to take the job, but no one who knows the country south. Three days ago I had a bunch of cattle stolen right here from the home-ranch corrals, and by one man, at that. It wasn't much of a bunch—about twenty head—but I'm going to make a starter right here, and now. I'm going to get that bunch back, and the man who stole them, if I have to go to hell to do it. And I'm going to do the same with every case of rustling that comes up from now on. I don't care if it's only one cow, I'm going to get it back—every trip. Now, I want to know if you'll lead a posse down into the south country and bring out that last bunch, and the man who rustled them?"

"I don't know—" hesitated the stranger.

"I offer you five thousand dollars in gold if you'll bring back those cows and the man who stole 'em," repeated Buck Johnson. "And I'll give you all the horses and men you think you need."

"I'll do it," replied the two-gun man promptly.

"Good!" cried Buck Johnson, "and you better start to-morrow."

"I shall start to-night—right now."

"Better yet. How many men do you want, and grub for how long?"

"I'll play her a lone hand."

"Alone!" exclaimed Johnson, his confidence visibly cooling. "Alone! Do you think you can make her?"

"I'll be back with those cattle in not more than ten days."

"And the man," supplemented the Señor.

"And the man. What's more, I want

that money here when I come in. I don't aim to stay in this country over night."

A grin overspread Buck Johnson's countenance. He understood.

"Climate not healthy for you?" he hazarded. "I guess you'd be safe enough all right with us. But suit yourself. The money will be here."

"That's agreed?" insisted the two-gun man.

"Sure."

"I want a fresh horse—I'll leave mine—he's a good one. I want a little grub."

"All right. Parker'll fit you out."

The stranger rose.

"I'll see you in about ten days."

"Good luck," Señor Buck Johnson wished him.

IV. THE ACCOMPLISHMENT

THE next morning Buck Johnson took a trip down into the "pasture" of five hundred wire-fenced acres.

"He means business," he confided to Jed Parker, on his return. "That cavallo of his is a heap sight better than the Shorty horse we let him take. Jed, you found your man with nerve, all right. How did you do it?"

The two settled down to wait, if not with confidence, at least with interest. Sometimes, remembering the desperate character of the outlaws, their fierce distrust of any intruder, the wildness of the country, Buck Johnson and his foreman inclined to the belief that the stranger had undertaken a task beyond the powers of any one man. Again, remembering the stranger's cool gray eye, the poise of his demeanour, the quickness of his movements, and the two guns with tied holsters to permit of easy withdrawal, they were almost persuaded that he might win.

"He's one of those long-chance fellows," surmised Jed. "He likes excitement. I see that by the way he takes up with my knife play. He'd rather leave his hide on the fence than stay in the corral."

"Well, he's all right," replied Señor Buck Johnson, "and if he ever gets back, which same I'm some doubtful of, his dinero 'll be here for him."

In pursuance of this he rode in to Willets, where shortly the overland train brought him from Tucson the five thousand dollars in double eagles.

In the meantime the regular life of the ranch went on. Each morning Sang, the Chinese cook, rang the great bell, summon-

ing the men. They ate, and then caught up the saddle horses for the day, turning those not wanted from the corral into the pasture. Shortly they jingled away in different directions, two by two, on the slow Spanish trot of the cowpuncher. All day long thus they would ride, without food or water for man or beast, looking the range, identifying the stock, branding the young calves, examining generally into the state of affairs, gazing always with grave eyes on the magnificent, flaming, changing, beautiful, dreadful desert of the Arizona plains. At evening when the coloured atmosphere, catching the last glow, threw across the Chiricahuas its veil of mystery, they jingled in again, two by two, untired, unhasting, the glory of the desert in their deep-set, steady eyes.

And all the day long, while they were absent, the cattle, too, made their pilgrimage, straggling in singly, in pairs, in bunches, in long files, leisurely, ruminantly, without haste. There, at the long troughs filled by the windmill or the blindfolded pump mule, they drank, then filed away again into the mists of the desert. And Señor Buck Johnson, or his foreman, Parker, examined them for their condition, noting the increase, remarking the strays from another range. Later, perhaps, they, too, rode abroad. The same thing happened at nine other ranches from five to ten miles apart, where dwelt other fierce, silent men all under the authority of Buck Johnson.

And when night fell, and the topaz and violet and saffron and amethyst and mauve and lilac had faded suddenly from the Chiricahuas, like a veil that has been rent, and the ramparts had become slate-gray and then black—the soft-breathed night wandered here and there over the desert, and

the land fell under an enchantment even stranger than the day's.

So the days went by, wonderful, fashioning the ways and the characters of men. Seven passed. Buck Johnson and his foreman began to look for the stranger. Eight, they began to speculate. Nine, they doubted. On the tenth they gave him up—and he came.

They knew him first by the soft lowing of cattle. Jed Parker, dazzled by the lamp, peered out from the door, and made him out dimly turning the animals into the corral. A moment later his pony's hoofs impacted softly on the baked earth, he dropped from the saddle and entered the room.

"I'm late," said he briefly, glancing at the clock, which indicated ten; "but I'm here."

His manner was quick and sharp, almost breathless, as though he had been running.

"Your cattle are in the corral: all of them. Have you the money?"

"I have the money here," replied Buck Johnson, laying his hand against a drawer, "and it's ready for you when you've earned it. I don't care so much for the cattle. What I wanted is the man who stole them. Did you bring him?"

"Yes, I brought him," said the stranger. "Let's see that money."

Buck Johnson threw open the drawer, and from it the heavy canvas sack.

"It's here. Now bring in your prisoner."

The two-gun man seemed suddenly to loom large in the doorway. The muzzles of his revolvers covered the two before him. His speech came short and sharp.

"I told you I'd bring back the cows and the one who rustled them," he snapped. "I never lied to a man yet. Your stock is in the corral. I'll trouble you for that five thousand. I'm the man who stole your cattle!"



Moods

By LUIS MUÑOZ MARIN

I WOULD sing of soft things to-day—
Foliage, furs, yielding distances,
The bosom of my beloved.

Yesterday I sang of strong things—
Winds, rivers, mad slaves,
A mountain carrying me on its back to the sky,
The bosom of my beloved.

The Twelve Green Russian Garnets

By ARTHUR SHERBURNE HARDY

*Yours sincerely
Arthur Sherburne Hardy*

IT WAS called the "Hôtel d'Italie et d'Angleterre." Why? Neither Italians nor Englishmen frequented it. Nor had M. Achille, its proprietor, ever visited these countries except in imagination. Why not "Peking and Timbuctoo"?

It possessed a terrace extending to the river, where it was a delight to dine on summer evenings, especially if one selected a table by the railing, from which one could see the reflections of the lights on the bridge and hear the lapping of little waves against the wall. Its front was overwhelmed by vines, which almost entirely obscured the letters of its Anglo-Italian appellation, and dropped their leaves and blossoms on the awning sheltering the tables on either side of the entrance.

Seated at one of these tables behind the protecting row of box trees, his hands clasped over his white waistcoat, Inspector Joly could observe people walking in the shade of the *allée* or gossiping on the stone seats. M. Joly preferred society to solitude. He loved movement and the sun. Under ordinary circumstances he would certainly have been amused at the little army of school children, their knapsacks bulging with books, gathered in awe about the yellow omnibus, which, after so many fruitless journeys to the station beyond the bridge, had returned groaning under such a load of baggage that its passage beneath the low arch of the clock-tower had been accomplished only by a miracle of skill.

M. Achille was beside himself with importance. His entire first floor had been taken. When not adding to the confusion

by the multiplicity of his orders, he stood in an attitude of silent contemplation which reminded one of the coloured print in the *salle-à-manger*—Napoleon watching the preparations for the embarkation of the army at Boulogne.

All this tumult, however, failed to interest M. Joly. He was reflecting. He had come to Freyr to make an important arrest, and as his hand closed upon the criminal an order from Paris had set this criminal free. M. Joly respected authority, but he was annoyed. He did not approve of pardons. Society was of more importance than the individual. According to his theory, when one has once definitely entered the criminal class one remains there. To open the cage door is to let loose the hawk. For the woman who had set the machinery of mercy in motion, however, he had conceived a profound respect, having fallen in twenty-four hours under the spell of that public sentiment of Freyr which took it for granted that whatever the Countess Anne did was right. Sitting alone behind the box trees, M. Joly shrugged his shoulders with the air of Pilate washing his hands of all responsibility.

Meanwhile a *valet de chambre* in a green apron, having dismantled the pyramid of baggage of the lesser objects which decorated its sides, assisted by the driver of the yellow omnibus, was attacking the enormous trunks which formed its core.

"Yes," M. Achille was saying in answer to a question from the *sergent de ville*, "an American family—monsieur, his secretary, madame, mademoiselle, the valet of monsieur, and two maids."

"*Sapristi!* it is a caravan," commented

the *sergent*. "From America from Brazil probably, or Chile!"

"No, from North America, from New York."

"Ah, what a people! to incommode themselves, to cross the sea——"

"Nowadays it is nothing," interrupted M. Achille loftily.

"There is always the danger of shipwreck, to say nothing of seasickness. I prefer travel by land," persisted the *sergent*, whose journeying, to and fro, under the lindens of the *allée*, resembled those of the pendulum.

If M. Joly observed and heard all this, it was from force of habit, for he gave no sign. Mechanically he looked at his watch—two o'clock; there was still an hour before the train. Rising, he took a few turns back and forth under the awning, still preoccupied, his hands crossed behind him. On the terrace a young officer was reading the feuilleton of the *Echo de Paris*. At his feet a little girl with a wooden shovel was excavating for hidden treasure, regardless of the consequences to her white frock. Leaning against his chair was a red parasol, whose owner was crumbling M. Achille's bread to the minnows at the foot of the wall, her pointed shoes projecting through the railing. The picture was a pretty one, and M. Joly adored the picturesque. When off duty, as it were, he found infinite relief in idealizing. Seeing him contemplating this scene, one expected to hear him exclaim, "*Que c'est beau, l'amour et la paix!*" But he only shrugged his shoulders again, crossed the terrace to the bureau, and demanded his bill.

"Monsieur does not wait for the omnibus?"

"No, I prefer to walk."

Just beyond the box trees, leaning amicably against the side wall of M. Achille's establishment, was a little shop of one story bearing the sign "Perrin—Antiquaire." M. Joly stopped before its one dingy window, not because he was interested in antiquities, but because he had time to spare, when suddenly his round eyes, wandering over the motley collection of bric-à-brac, became fixed, riveted, upon an object suspended by a string from one of the shelves. It was a Japanese gold coin, rectangular in shape, surrounded by twelve green Russian garnets.

M. Joly had an astonishing memory, which stored up automatically impressions of no apparent importance. This lumberhouse of unforgetten things, so invaluable to one of his profession, had not infre-

quently afforded him precious assistance. At this moment he had precisely the air of a man searching for something in a heap of rubbish. Yes! now he remembered. The recollections evoked by this object dangling from its string had arranged themselves in their proper places. Madame Raymonde, living in the Impasse Bertrand, —one of those pieces of wreckage, the press had said, which storms leave stranded in obscure places,—found dead one morning in her room. The medical examiner had reported death from natural causes, the autopsy having revealed a weak heart. The dead woman had no known enemies, no visitors, no acquaintances even. Robbery was impossible, for she possessed nothing. So the affair was forgotten.

But M. Joly had not forgotten. Standing before this window, his eyes half closed, he had succeeded in dragging out from his storehouse a fact to which these green garnets gave a new significance. Contrary to all the evidence, a neighbour occupying an adjoining room had insisted that Madame Raymonde's death was not a natural one. Why? Had she seen any one? No. Had she heard anything? No. But Madame Raymonde possessed a jewel, and this jewel had disappeared. She had seen it once only, by accident, when madame was dressing, concealed in her bosom beneath her dress, and could therefore give but the vaguest description of it; but on one point she was persistent—it was of gold, with a border of stones like green flames. This theory, contributed by an outsider, the police treated with scant courtesy. The story was pronounced incredible, and the jewel a myth. Jewels were invented for display, not concealment. There was nothing to prove that madame possessed any such ornament at the time of her death. No one else had seen it, and it was impossible to possess what never had been seen.

M. Joly smiled as he recalled this conclusion. Professional pride did not prevent him from smiling in secret at the mistakes of his colleagues. Was it, indeed, a mistake? One circumstance certainly had given body to suspicion. According to the version in the press, just before her death Madame Raymonde had engaged a *bonne* and this *bonne* had disappeared as completely as the jewel. It was not possible to pronounce the *bonne* also a myth, yet every effort to discover her had proved fruitless, and M. Joly knew from experience that when the police do not succeed they forget. He

admitted that to connect this bit of jewelry with the events of the *Impasse Bertrand* was a pure speculation; but, methodical as he was, he believed in irresistible impulses—and opened M. Perrin's door.

For a quarter of an hour he examined in turn a Zaghran embroidery, a Louis XV snuffbox, a decanter of La Granja glass, learning in the meanwhile that M. Perrin had an establishment in Paris, 117 Rue Lafayette. About to take his leave, he paused a moment at the window.

"It is curious, this," he said, detaching the garnet pin from its string.

"It is nothing, it is modern," remarked the shopkeeper, reaching for a chain of seed-pearls spaced with Indian amethysts.

"But it amuses me. At what do you value it?"

"Two hundred francs."

"Come, now, these are garnets, not emeralds." M. Joly was an expert in precious stones.

"That is true," admitted M. Perrin, with increased respect, "but——"

"You have a record of your purchases," interrupted M. Joly curtly.

"Certainly."

"That is prudent. Let us see it. Here is my card."

Having adjusted his spectacles and examined the card, the hesitation of M. Perrin disappeared.

No. 1798. *Bought of Jean Dufresnes, concierge, 5 Impasse Bertrand.*

Then followed the date and a character in cipher indicating the price.

"Good," said M. Joly, taking a hundred-franc note from the folds of his pocketbook and putting in its place the garnet pin. "You have your professional secrets and I have mine. Good-day, Monsieur Perrin."

"Good day, Monsieur l'Inspecteur."

Alone in the compartment of a second-class carriage M. Joly smiled again. He stood for a while at the window watching the receding meadows of Freyr, then ensconcing himself in a corner opened his pocketbook. It was most certainly a curious thing—this Japanese coin, with its strange characters and green garnets ranged along its sides. No jeweler would invent a combination so unconventional, so meaningless. And precisely because so unconventional, it must have a meaning—a meaning due to some exceptional circumstance, some personal experience, which it was perhaps designed as a gift to commemorate and keep in perpetual remembrance. Why else should this strange

ornament lie concealed in a woman's bosom? M. Joly did not share with some of his colleagues their scorn for speculation. For the very reason that certain facts were missing he found speculation a necessity. He maintained that the rôle of the imagination was as important for him as for the scientist, whose hypothesis is a fire-ball thrown out into the outlying dark—to illuminate that darkness, not to attract attention to itself by its own brilliancy. His preliminary inspection completed, he took out his microscope. Ah! by turning slightly one of the garnets a spring was released and the back slid gently in its grooves. Inside? Nothing. His curiosity satisfied, he composed himself in his corner, folded his hands, closed his eyes, and went to sleep.

When M. Joly inquired for the *concierge* at No. 5 *Impasse Bertrand*, an old man sitting before the doorway in the sun rose and took off his hat.

"You are Monsieur Dufresnes?"

"At your service, monsieur."

The man leaned heavily upon a stick, his hat trembling in his hand. Beneath his thin white hair a pair of faded blue eyes produced in M. Joly a kind of shock, for this benevolent face assuredly did not conform to the criminal type. In abandoning one theory M. Joly said to himself, "Come, come, now you are forming another." Then aloud, "You have been here a long time?"

"A long time, monsieur."

"Perhaps, then, you can tell me something about one of your former lodgers."

"It is possible."

"Madame Raymonde."

"Ah."

"Why do you say 'ah'?"

"Your pardon, but—you knew Madame Raymonde?"

"Let us say I am a relation," said M. Joly.

M. Dufresnes made no reply. He seemed dazed, looking toward the door of the lodge as if appealing for help.

"Shall we go in?" said M. Joly, leading the way.

A woman was standing before the charcoal fire, a spoon in her hand. "My wife," said M. Dufresnes. She was much younger than he. Her face retained a certain freshness. It was a pleasant face, even a happy one. "Marie, monsieur is a relation of Madame Raymonde. He has come to make some inquiries."

"Ah." The woman laid down her spoon, wiping her hand on her apron.

"Why do you say 'ah'?" repeated M. Joly.

"I did not know that Madame Raymonde had any relations."

"One always has relations," smiled Monsieur Joly.

"That is true," observed M. Dufresnes.

His wife gave him a quick glance of impatience. In the pause which followed, a clock ticking conscientiously on the mantel seemed to be saying, "What next! what next!"

"She died very suddenly," remarked M. Joly, taking a chair.

"What is it you wish to know?" exclaimed the woman, almost fiercely, approaching her visitor, her hands on her hips.

"It is so dark here. Shall we have a little light?" M. Joly spoke in his most affable manner. There was but one small window and he abhorred shadows. The woman obeyed sullenly, placing the lamp on the table among the vegetables laid out for the evening soup.

"What do I wish to know?" repeated M. Joly, taking from his pocketbook the green garnet pin and laying it softly beside the lamp on the table. "I wish to know what price Monsieur Perrin paid you for this."

M. Dufresnes's eyes were glued upon the garnets, shining in the dull light of the lamp; his wife's, fixed upon M. Joly, asked, "Who are you and what do you want?"

"I am Inspector Joly," he said.

The woman's eyes filled with anxiety. Even to the innocent the presence of the police is disturbing. One begins to imagine vaguely some unsuspected danger, some forgotten incident, some terrible mistake. Suspicion affrights innocence as accusation terrifies guilt.

"Your husband is ill."

The woman turned quickly, leading the trembling man to the recess, where he sank into a chair. "It is nothing," she said reassuringly; "I will talk with monsieur."

M. Joly was perplexed by the collapse of the man, by the calmness of the woman, standing between him and the alcove in the attitude of an animal defending its young.

"Sit down," he said politely.

She took the chair indicated, waiting, her hands folded in her lap, as if to say: "Interrogate me."

"Well, proceed," said M. Joly. There was in his tone none of the authority with which he had addressed the shopman.

"Tell me all that you know about Madame Raymonde. You have nothing to fear."

She began without reserve, in a low voice and an accent of sincerity. The first shock of alarm gone, the words came freely, as from one who, long troubled by some secret burden, had expected the hour of deliverance.

"Madame came alone, in May. She lived very quietly, doing her own work, going out always at nightfall to make her purchases."

"The evening is not a favourable time to visit the markets," observed M. Joly.

"That is true. I also remarked that. But madame was not communicative. If I questioned her she became silent. Regularly every week she paid the rent. At other times, in passing, she would say, 'Good-evening, Madame Dufresnes,' and I, 'Good-evening, Madame Raymonde,' that was all. The only person in whom she showed interest was my little Rosalie, whom she would send for whenever possible. Often I asked, 'What does Madame Raymonde say to you up there, Rosalie?' 'She sews, and kisses me and tells me stories.' 'What stories?' 'Of great plains and forests where are wolves and much snow.'"

"She was a Russian?"

"I do not know, monsieur. She spoke French as I do. At first she was not cheerful. She had always the same anxious expression. Afterward she became more tranquil and smiled at me in passing. 'Madame is better,' I said to her one day. 'I shall leave you this week; I am going home,' she replied gayly. That evening when she returned she was much agitated. It was the 11th of June. I remember the day well because on Sunday of that week my Rosalie went to her first communion. It was not her habit to come into the lodge. I thought she had received some bad news. 'What has happened?' I said to her, seeing her look about like an animal that is hunted. She took my hands in hers, which were cold. 'Dear madame,' she said, 'I beg of you to listen to me'; then she took this"—Madame Dufresnes touched the garnet pin—"from beneath her dress, opened it, and showed me a paper within. 'If anything should happen to me—' 'What should happen to you, madame?' I said. Her manner terrified me. 'No one can tell what may happen. Is it so uncommon a thing to die? See, this is how it opens,' showing me and pressing the pin into my hand; 'promise me, if anything should happen, to deliver this paper to—"

morrow to the person whose address is written on the back.' What could I do! At such moments one promises everything. I thought her mad. Well, I promised; she embraced me and was gone. Afterward I regretted. I said to myself: 'If, indeed, something should happen, something terrible! It is better not to be mixed up in such matters.' Scarcely had she gone when a woman came asking for Madame Raymonde. 'The fourth floor, the door to the right,' I said. It was so sudden, so unexpected, I answered from habit. The jewel was still in my hand. But I collected myself. 'I think she is ill,' I said; 'I will go and see.' 'Certainly she is ill,' replied the woman; 'I am the *bonne* she has sent for,' and she went up the stairs. I told my husband it was strange madame had not informed me that this *bonne* should come. 'Why do you always worry about the affairs of other people?' he said. Nevertheless, all the night I reproached myself for allowing that woman to enter. But you know how it is, monsieur, when one is *concierge*. Some one comes, asks for some one, and one answers. Early in the morning I said to Rosalie, 'Go and see if anything is wrong with Madame Raymonde; there is a *bonne* there; ask if madame is ill.' When the child came back she said she had knocked, that there was no sound within. Ah, then I was truly alarmed. I called my husband. It was quite true, as Rosalie had said, there was no sound. The door was not locked; we went in together. The *bonne* was not there. Madame was alone in bed. I touched her; she was dead. My husband ran into the street. I called for help. Then the police came, the doctor—the whole house was in an uproar."

The woman paused, as though she expected to be questioned.

"Go on," said M. Joly.

"The next day I went, as I had promised, to the Rue Saint-Denis, No. 219—the address on the paper. It was the 12th of June. I asked for Monsieur Meller. 'Yes,' said the concierge, 'he arrived last night.' His room was under the roof. 'Monsieur,' I said, 'I have come from Madame Raymonde.' 'Madame Raymonde?' he replied; 'I do not know her.' 'But I have a message from her,' I said, opening my hand in which was the pin. On seeing it, instantly his manner changed. 'It is well,' he said. Then I took out the paper, as madame had shown me, and gave it to him—but he did not look at it. 'Go,' he said; 'it is not good for you to be seen here.' I was so

agitated I could not speak, even to say Madame Raymonde was dead. I was astonished also that he did not take the jewel."

She stopped abruptly.

"And you did not see what was written on this paper?"

"No, monsieur."

"That is all?"

"That is all, monsieur."

"And you said nothing to any one?"

"Why should I say anything? Did I know anything? All these events terrified me."

"You were not afraid to dispose of this?" asked M. Joly, replacing the garnet pin in his pocketbook.

"My husband said: 'Why not? No one knows of it. We will add the money to the dot of Rosalie.' It is the truth, monsieur."

M. Joly was buttoning up his coat. "I believe you," he said, simply.

"The devil!" he exclaimed, on the way home, "I forgot to ask how much Monsieur Perrin contributed to the dot of Rosalie."

Madame Joly generally shared her husband's professional perplexities. In this instance he had kept silent, all because of the hundred francs paid M. Perrin. It would, he knew, be impossible to explain how the green garnets came to occupy a place in his pocketbook without mentioning that sum. It must not be supposed that these two were not of one mind. On the contrary, the same ambition animated them both, this ambition being a sort of castle in Spain to be realized when, at a certain indefinite age, M. Joly should retire from active work. Having no children, all their economies had this castle in Spain in view—a little villa, in a garden, inclosed by a high wall. Every night, after pulling his nightcap well over his ears and closing his eyes, M. Joly took a key from his pocket, and having paused just long enough to read the word "Monrepos" in white letters on a blue ground beside the gate, opened the latter cautiously and closed it proudly behind him. Straight before him was a gravel path, with a basin midway between the gate and the house. Other paths meandered between parterres—to each one of which he had assigned its particular arrangement of flowers—on one side to an arbour where he would pause again to sip an imaginary syrup or smoke an imaginary cigar; on the other to a well, destined to furnish the water necessary for the plants. Having finished his cigar and listened to the music of the fountain, M. Joly began

his duties as gardener, and all this required so much time that he invariably fell asleep before reaching the *perron* of the house—which thus remained a veritable castle in Spain.

But, on the night of his return from the Impasse Bertrand, he was not thinking of "Monrepos." Who was this woman without resources who paid her rent regularly and whose death, originally the sole object of his inquiries, opened the door to a greater mystery? What was the message, so jealously guarded, delivered to the lodger of the Rue Saint-Denis? Long after Madame Joly had fallen asleep he groped alone in the obscurity of conjectures. He knew that he was not dealing with the amateur who blunders into the clutches of the police as a young partridge flutters into the jaws of the fox; nor with the ordinary criminal who, destitute of originality, commits over and over the same crimes from the same motives by the same methods, and whose capture is only an incident of professional routine.

M. Joly sometimes obeyed impulses, but he did not wait for them; nor did he trust to chance. He began, therefore, a careful investigation of No. 219 Rue Saint-Denis. Within a week the name, age, occupation, associates, habits of its every occupant were in his possession. Among these names was that of M. Meller. The information concerning the latter was incomplete. Was he a commercial traveler? For he was to be seen only for a few days, usually about the middle of the month, and in the interim disappeared completely from sight. M. Joly contended that his best thoughts came, not logically from established facts, but from God knows where—motherless and fatherless offspring. It was thus that the idea came to him to call upon M. Meller on the 12th of the month. He treated this idea at first with contempt, then with incredulity, and finally seeing that it refused to depart, he adopted and justified it. Madame Dufresnes had delivered the message on that date—M. Meller was in the habit of returning the middle of the month—and about the Japanese coin were twelve Russian garnets. His ordinary procedure would have been to examine M. Meller's room in his absence. One often obtains interesting information from a room whose tenant is absent. But he resisted this temptation, and on the morning of the 12th descended the slope of the Boulevard and turned into the Rue Saint-Denis. Believing with Napoleon that

Providence is on the side of the stronger battalions, he took with him two agents of the secret service.

Yes, M. Meller occupied a room on the court, the fourth floor. Yes, M. Meller was in. "Shall I accompany monsieur?" added the concierge.

"I don't need you," said M. Joly.

"Very well—the second door from the landing, on the left."

At the head of the stairs, M. Joly said to the agents: "You will remain in the corridor. Should I need you, I will call."

At the door he knocked gently.

"Come in," said a voice.

He turned the knob, went in, and closed the door behind him. A man was sitting at a table, reading. M. Joly observed him attentively—a slight figure, narrow-chested, with stooping shoulders, reassuringly insignificant. On the pale face, however, was written tenacity and resolution.

"Monsieur Meller?"

"That is my name."

M. Joly took out his pocketbook. He had quite the manner of a lawyer announcing to some poor devil an unexpected legacy.

"Permit me to sit down," he said, drawing a chair to the opposite side of the table. "I have a message for you." At the sight of the garnet pin the man started, but said nothing. "Here it is." M. Joly released the spring carefully and took out a small roll of paper.

"Very well," said the man, without moving.

"But, monsieur, I beg you to examine it. Such were my instructions."

The man hesitated, then opened the roll. As he proceeded his face assumed a deadly pallor—the paper was a blank. He sprang trembling to his feet.

"Sit down, monsieur," said M. Joly, taking a pistol from his pocket and laying it on the table before him. The man uttered a groan that was terrible. He was not looking at M. Joly. He appeared to be invoking an invisible presence.

"Sit down," thundered M. Joly. "Do you wish me to put a hole through you?"

"If you wish, fire." The voice was that of a man indifferent to consequences, because hopelessly trapped. At the same instant he carried his hand quickly to his waistcoat pocket.

"Ah, wretch!" shouted M. Joly, dashing aside the table and seizing the man's wrist. "Help! help!"

At his cry the agents burst open the door.

To their amazement they saw a man, his arms pinioned to his sides, in the strong grasp of their chief. The next moment this man lay panting on the floor, helpless, handcuffed, his feet bound. Beside him was a broken vial from which exhaled the bitter odour of almonds.

"*Dame!*" muttered M. Joly, wiping the perspiration from his brow, "here is another who came near having a weak heart."

"You are hurt, Monsieur l'Inspecteur?"

He shook them off roughly. "Ah, rascal!" apostrophizing the figure on the floor, "we nearly made a mess of it." He examined the room feverishly—the closet, in which hung only an overcoat, a wooden box studded with nails, containing a few insignificant articles of wearing apparel. The drawer of the table was empty, the book, a second-hand copy of "*Monte Cristo*." Watching these proceedings, the man on the floor smiled. In his pockets—nothing. Beside the broken vial lay the garnet pin, and near-by the pistol. M. Joly replaced these in the deep pocket of his overcoat. Then he sat down, in his customary attitude, his hands clasped over his waistcoat. His little plan had miscarried. He had expected to discover something, and he had discovered nothing. Often perplexed, for the first time in his career he was bewildered. But he understood now the sudden death of Madame Raymonde. What people! to bar with their own bodies, like desperate defenders of a fortress, the approach of the enemy. And this fortress which they defended, what did it contain?

The man's eyes were closed now. M. Joly, who had put on his hat, took it off, gazing at the pale face with involuntary respect.

A timid knock interrupted his reflections. Opening the door, he saw his own servant.

"Monsieur, madame wishes me to tell you that Monsieur le Préfet has sent for you, and that it is urgent."

"Good," replied M. Joly gruffly, shutting the door in the girl's face.

Although her husband had never received that thrust of the knife in the back, the fear of which often kept Madame Joly awake while her consort was watering the flowers of "*Monrepos*," yet she had never permitted him to leave his apartment without extracting from him the secret of his destination. While she was brushing his coat and straightening his cravat, there invariably occurred the following colloquy: "At what time will you return?" "Really now, how should I know?" "You are

going—?" "How can I tell! you know very well—" "But if any one should inquire for you." "True," and here M. Joly would confess his destination; after which madame would say, "Be prudent," and he would answer, "Assuredly." It was thus that the message from the prefect came to be delivered in the Rue Saint-Denis.

"Remain here, touch nothing," he said to the agents, "and"—pointing to the body on the floor—"pay attention; he is capable of something. I will go for the authorities."

On the way to the prefecture he was alternately elated and depressed. He held the end of a thread, that was certain; but he did not know where it led. What did M. Levigne want of him? Usually a summons of this kind meant some delicate mission. It was impossible that it should have any connection with the events which had just transpired, and to be interrupted in this manner, at a critical moment, annoyed him. He knew that the prefect thought well of him. He was not surprised, then, when his name was announced, to hear the familiar words: "Ah, it is Monsieur Joly. Let him enter."

M. Levigne was writing. He did not look up, nor did he cease writing. In the far corner of the room sat a woman, to whom, as etiquette required, M. Joly paid no attention. The silence, broken only by the scratching of the quill pen, was disconcerting. It was a reception to which he was not accustomed.

"It seems," said M. Levigne, at length, "that you are interested in the affair of the Impasse Bertrand."

"The devil!" thought M. Joly, "the place was watched."

"That in your leisure moments"—M. Joly winced at the fine note of irony in the prefect's voice—"you are making inquiries for a woman who disappeared there. Well"—with a wave of the pen to the figure behind him—"here she is."

M. Joly began to understand why the disappearance of this woman had failed to excite the zeal of the police. He began also to realize the excess of his own. It was an excellent opportunity, however, to display his mastery of surprise, therefore he remained immobile and silent.

"We are not so stupid here." For the first time M. Levigne laid down his pen and, leaning back in his chair, fixed his eyes upon the inspector. "I repeat, we are not so stupid here as some appear to believe. We do not run after our own agents. Furthermore, we have better

employment for your leisure." He paused, as if to allow these words to sink the deeper into M. Joly's consciousness. A vision of "Monrepos" receding into the distance passed before the latter's eyes. "The preliminaries being settled," resumed M. Levigne, taking up a memorandum from his desk, "let us pass to certain facts of which you are ignorant. On the 2d of May it came to our knowledge that the Paris representative of the Russian police was selected for assassination; that a member of the Central Committee in St. Petersburg, with instructions for its agent here, would arrive by the express of the 5th. Unfortunately this person——"

"Madame Raymonde!" muttered M. Joly, under his breath.

"What do you say?"

"I said, 'I understand,' Monsieur le Préfet."

"Unfortunately this person left the train beyond the frontier and for a time eluded us—madame will explain to you in what manner. We had counseled our Russian colleague to go and amuse himself elsewhere for a time. But he has returned, and it seems the farce is about to recommence. It would be mortifying to invite this gentleman to take so soon another vacation. What you have to do is to discover and apprehend this agent. I say apprehend, for these people have an inconvenient way of eluding the interrogations

of justice. Madame, here, has given us a body—what we want is a man."

"I have both," said M. Joly.

"You have both! What do you mean?"

"I mean, Monsieur le Préfet, that the agent you seek is called Meller; that at this moment he lies on the floor of a room in the Rue Saint-Denis, No. 219, bound hand and foot and is at your service."

"Not possible!" exclaimed the prefect, less skillful than his subordinate in mastering surprise. "Explain yourself."

Concisely, modestly, as if making a commonplace report, M. Joly related the story of the green garnets from the hour when he first saw them dangling from the shelf in M. Perrin's window till, having finished his recital, he laid them respectfully on the prefect's desk.

M. Levigne examined them attentively, released the spring, and closed it again, with a deep sigh of mingled relief and astonishment.

"You have done a good piece of work, Monsieur Joly. For the present this belongs to the State. But we shall not forget you."

"Monsieur le Préfet," said M. Joly, twisting his hat in his hand, "if I might repeat a remark you have just deigned to make——"

"Repeat it."

"That we are not so stupid here as some would appear to believe."



Tears

A Lyric of Korea

Translated by E. Powys Mathers

HOW can a heart play any more with life,
After it has found a woman and known tears?

In vain I shut my windows against the moonlight;
I have estranged sleep.

The flower of her face is growing in the shadow
Among warm and rustling leaves . . .

I see the sunlight on her house,
I see her curtains of vermilion silk . . .

Here is the almond-coloured dawn;
And there is dew on the petals of my night flower.



A Curtain Lecture of Mrs. Caudle's

By
DOUGLAS JERROLD

FOR Job Caudle was one of the few men whom Nature, in her casual bounty to

women, sends into the world as patient listeners. He was, perhaps, in more respects than one, all ears. And these ears, Mrs. Caudle—his lawful, wedded wife, as she would ever and anon impress upon him, for she was not a woman to wear chains without shaking them—took whole and sole possession of. They were her entire property; as expressly made to convey to Caudle's brain the stream of wisdom that continually flowed from the lips of his wife, as was the tin funnel through which Mrs. Caudle in vintage time bottled her elder wine. There was, however, this difference between the wisdom and the wine. The wine was always sugared: the wisdom, never. It was expressed crude from the heart of Mrs. Caudle; who, doubtless, trusted to the sweetness of her husband's disposition to make it agree with him.

Philosophers have debated whether morning or night is most conducive to the strongest and clearest moral impressions. The Grecian sage confessed that his labours smelt of the lamp. In like manner, did Mrs. Caudle's wisdom smell of the rushlight. She knew that her husband was too much distracted by his business as toy-man and doll-merchant to digest her lessons in the broad day. Besides, she could never make sure of him: he was always liable to be summoned to the shop. Now from eleven at night until seven in the morning, there was no retreat for him. He was compelled to lie and listen. Perhaps there was little magnanimity in this on the part of Mrs. Caudle; but in marriage, as in war, it is permitted

to take every advantage of the enemy. Besides, Mrs. Caudle copied very ancient and classic authority. Minerva's bird, the very wisest thing in feathers, is silent all the day. Like the

owl, she hooted only at night.

Mr. Caudle was blessed with an indomitable constitution. One fact will prove the truth of this. He lived thirty years with Mrs. Caudle, surviving her. Yes, it took thirty years for Mrs. Caudle to lecture and dilate upon the joys, griefs, duties, and vicissitudes comprised within that seemingly small circle—the wedding-ring. We say, seemingly small; for the thing, as viewed by the vulgar, naked eye, is a tiny hoop made for the third feminine finger. Alack! like the ring of Saturn, for good or evil, it circles a whole world. Or, to take a less gigantic figure, it compasses a vast region: it may be Arabia Felix, and it may be Arabia Petrea.

A lemon-hearted cynic might liken the wedding-ring to an ancient Circus, in which wild animals clawed one another for the sport of lookers-on. Perish the hyperbole! We would rather compare it to an elfin ring, in which dancing fairies made the sweetest music for infirm humanity.

Manifold are the uses of rings. Even swine are tamed by them. You will see a vagrant, hilarious, devastating porker—a full-blooded fellow that would bleed into many, many fathoms of black pudding—you will see him, escaped from his proper home, straying in a neighbour's garden. How he tramples upon the heart's-ease: how, with quivering snout, he roots up lilies—odoriferous bulbs! Here he gives a reckless snatch at thyme and marjoram—and here he munches violets and gilly-flowers. At length the marauder is

detected, seized by his owner, and driven, beaten home. To make the porker less dangerous, it is determined that he shall be ringed. The sentence is pronounced—execution ordered. Listen to his screams!

"Would you not think the knife was in his throat?
And yet they're only boring through his nose!"

Hence, for all future time, the porker behaves himself with a sort of forced propriety—for in either nostril he carries a ring. It is, for the greatness of humanity, a saddening thought, that sometimes men must be treated no better than pigs.

But Mr. Job Caudle was not of these men. Marriage to him was not made a necessity. No; for him call it if you will a happy chance—a golden accident. It is, however, enough for us to know that he was married; and was therefore made the recipient of a wife's wisdom. Mrs. Caudle, like Mahomet's dove, continually pecked at the good man's ears; and it is a happiness to learn from what he left behind that he had hived all her sayings in his brain; and further, that he employed the mellow evening of his life to put such sayings down, that, in due season, they might be enshrined in imperishable type.

When Mr. Job Caudle was left in this briary world without his daily guide and nocturnal monitress, he was in the ripe fullness of fifty-two. For three hours at least after he went to bed—such slaves are we to habit—he could not close an eye. His wife still talked at his side. True it was, she was dead and decently interred. His mind—it was a comfort to know it—could not wander on this point; this he knew. Nevertheless, his wife was with him. The Ghost of her Tongue still talked as in the life; and again and again did Job Caudle hear the monitions of by-gone years. At times, so loud, so lively, so real were the sounds, that Job, with a cold chill, doubted

if he were really widowed. And then, with the movement of an arm, a foot, he would assure himself that he was alone in his holland. Nevertheless, the talk continued. It was terrible to be thus haunted by a voice; to have advice, commands, remonstrance, all sorts of saws and adages still poured upon him, and no visible wife. Now did the voice speak from the curtains; now from the tester; and now did it whisper to Job from the very pillow that he pressed. "It's a dreadful thing that her tongue should walk in this manner," said Job, and then he thought confusedly of exorcism, or at least of counsel from the parish priest.

Whether Job followed his own brain, or the wise direction of another, we know not. But he resolved every night to commit to paper one curtain lecture of his late wife. The employment would, possibly, lay the ghost that haunted him. It was her dear tongue that cried for justice, and when thus satisfied, it might possibly rest in quiet. And so it happened. Job faithfully chronicled all his late wife's lectures; the ghost of her tongue was thenceforth silent, and Job slept all his after nights in peace.

When Job died, a small packet of papers was found inscribed as follows:

"CURTAIN LECTURES DELIVERED IN THE
COURSE OF THIRTY YEARS BY MRS.
MARGARET CAUDLE, AND SUFFERED BY
JOB, HER HUSBAND."

That Mr. Caudle had his eye upon the future printer, is made pretty probable by the fact that in most places he had affixed the text—such text for the most part arising out of his own daily conduct—to the lecture of the night. He had also, with an instinctive knowledge of the dignity of literature, left a bank-note of very fair amount with the manuscript. Following our duty as editor, we trust we have done justice to both documents.

Mr. Caudle Has Lent Five Pounds to a Friend

"YOU ought to be very rich, Mr. Caudle. I wonder who'd lend you five pounds? But so it is: a wife may work and may slave! Ha, dear! the many things that might have been done with five pounds. As if people picked up money in the street! But you always were a fool, Mr. Caudle! I've wanted a black satin gown these three years, and that five pounds would have entirely bought it. But it's no matter how I go—not at all. Everybody says I don't dress as becomes your wife—and I don't;

but what's that to you, Mr. Caudle? nothing. Oh, no! you can have fine feelings for everybody but those belonging to you. I wish people knew you, as I do—that's all. You like to be called liberal—and your poor family pays for it.

"All the girls want bonnets, and where they're to come from I can't tell. Half five pounds would have bought 'em—but now they must go without. Of course, *they* belong to you; and anybody but your own flesh and blood, Mr. Caudle!

"The man called for the water-rate to-day; but I should like to know how people are to pay taxes, who throw away five pounds to every fellow that asks them?"

"Perhaps you don't know that Jack, this morning, knocked his shuttle-cock through his bed-room window. I was going to send for the glazier to mend it; but after you lent that five pounds I was sure we couldn't afford it. Oh, no! the window must go as it is; and pretty weather for a dear child to sleep with a broken window. He's got a cold already on his lungs, and I shouldn't at all wonder if that broken window settled him. If the dear boy dies, his death will be upon his father's head; for I'm sure we can't now pay to mend windows. We might though, and do a good many more things, too, if people didn't throw away their five pounds."

"Next Tuesday the fire-insurance is due. I should like to know how it's to be paid? Why, it can't be paid at all! That five pounds would have more than done it—and now, insurance is out of the question. And there never were so many fires as there are now. I shall never close my eyes all night—but what's that to you, so people can call you liberal, Mr. Caudle? Your wife and children may all be burnt alive in their beds—as all of us to a certainty shall be, for the insurance *must* drop. And after we've insured for so many years! But how, I should like to know, are people to insure who make ducks and drakes of their five pounds?"

"I did think we might go to Margate this summer. There's poor little Caroline, I'm sure she wants the sea. But no, dear creature! she must stop at home—all of us must stop at home—she'll go into a consumption, there's no doubt of that; yes—sweet little angel!—I've made up my mind to lose her, *now*. The child might have been saved; but people can't save their children and throw away their five pounds too."

"I wonder where poor little Mopsy is? While you were lending that five pounds, the dog ran out of the shop. You know, I never let it go into the street, for fear it should be bit by some mad dog, and come home and bite all the children. It wouldn't now at all astonish me if the animal was to come back with the hydrophobia, and give it to all the family. However, what's your family to you, so you can play the liberal creature with five pounds?"

"Do you hear that shutter, how it's banging to and fro? Yes—I know what it wants as well as you, it wants a new

fastening. I was going to send for the blacksmith to-day, but now it's out of the question: *now* it must bang of nights, since you've thrown away five pounds."

"Ha! there's the soot falling down the chimney. If I hate the smell of anything, it's the smell of soot. And you know it; but what are my feelings to you? *Sweep the Chimney!* Yes, it's all very fine to say, sweep the chimney—but how are chimneys to be swept—how are they to be paid for by people who don't take care of their five pounds?"

"Do you hear the mice running about the room? I hear them. If they were to drag only you out of bed, it would be no matter. *Set a trap for them!* Yes, it's easy enough to say—set a trap for 'em. But how are people to afford mouse-traps, when every day they lose five pounds?"

"Hark! I'm sure there's a noise down stairs. It wouldn't at all surprise me if there were thieves in the house. Well, it *may* be the cat; but thieves are pretty sure to come in some night. There's a wretched fastening to the back-door; but these are not times to afford bolts and bars, when people won't take care of their five pounds."

"Mary Anne ought to have gone to the dentist's to-morrow. She wants three teeth taken out. Now, it can't be done. Three teeth that quite disfigure the child's mouth. But there they must stop, and spoil the sweetest face that was ever made. Otherwise, she'd have been a wife for a lord. Now, when she grows up, who'll have her? Nobody. We shall die, and leave her alone and unprotected in the world. But what do you care for that? Nothing; so you can squander away five pounds."

* * * *

"And thus," comments Caudle, "according to my wife, she—dear soul!—couldn't have a satin gown—the girls couldn't have new bonnets—the water-rate must stand over—Jack must get his death through a broken window—our fire-insurance couldn't be paid, so that we should all fall victims to the devouring element—we couldn't go to Margate, and Caroline would go to an early grave—the dog would come home and bite us all mad—the shutter would go banging for ever—the soot would always fall—the mice never let us have a wink of sleep—thieves be always breaking in the house—our dear Mary Anne be for ever left an unprotected maid—and with other evils falling upon us, all, all because I would go on lending five pounds!"

Casey at the Bat

By JOSEPH QUINLAN MURPHY

IT LOOKED extremely rocky for the Mudville nine that day;
The score stood four to six, with but an inning left to play.
And so, when Cooney died at first, and Burrows did the same,
A pallor wreathed the features of the patrons of the game.
A straggling few got up to go, leaving there the rest,
With that hope which springs eternal within the human breast;
For they thought if only Casey could get a whack at that.
They'd put up even money with Casey at the bat.
But Flynn preceded Casey, and likewise so did Blake,
And the former was a pudding, and the latter was a fake;
So on that stricken multitude a death-like silence sat,
For there seemed but little chance of Casey's getting to the bat.
But Flynn let drive a single to the wonderment of all,
And the much despised Blakey tore the cover off the ball,
And when the dust had lifted and they saw what had occurred,
There was Blakey safe on second, and Flynn a-hugging third.
Then from the gladdened multitude went up a joyous yell,
It bounded from the mountain-top and rattled in the dell,
It struck upon the hillside, and rebounded on the flat,
For Casey, mighty Casey, was advancing to the bat.
There was ease in Casey's manner as he stepped into his place;
There was pride in Casey's bearing, and a smile on Casey's face;
And when, responding to the cheers, he lightly doffed his hat,
No stranger in the crowd could doubt 'twas Casey at the bat.
Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his hands with dirt,
Five thousand tongues applauded as he wiped them on his shirt;
And while the writhing pitcher ground the ball into his hip,
Defiance gleamed from Casey's eye, a sneer curled Casey's lip.
And now the leather-covered sphere came hurtling through the air,
And Casey stood a-watching it in haughty grandeur there;
Close by the sturdy batsman the ball unheeded sped—
"That hain't my style," said Casey. "Strike one," the umpire said.
From the bleachers black with people there rose a sullen roar,
Like the beating of the storm-waves on a stern and distant shore;
"Kill him! Kill the umpire!" shouted some one from the stand—
And it's likely they'd have done it had not Casey raised his hand.
With a smile of Christian charity great Casey's visage shone;
He stilled the rising tumult, and he bade the game go on;
He signaled to the pitcher, and again the spheroid flew,
But Casey still ignored it, and the umpire said, "Strike two."
"Fraud!" yelled the maddened thousands, and the echo answered "Fraud,"
But one scornful look from Casey, and the audience was awed;
They saw his face grow stern and cold; they saw his muscles strain,
And they knew that Casey would not let that ball go by again.
The sneer is gone from Casey's lips; his teeth are clinched with hate,
He pounds with cruel violence his bat upon the plate;
And now the pitcher holds the ball, and now he lets it go,
And now the air is shattered by the force of Casey's blow.
Oh! somewhere in this favoured land the sun is shining bright,
The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light,
And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout,
But there is no joy in Mudville—mighty Casey has "Struck Out."

Love of One's Neighbour

A Comedy

By LEONID ANDREYEV

Fenny Curry.

Translated by Thomas Seltzer

SCENE: *A wild place in the mountains.*

A man in an attitude of despair is standing on a tiny projection of a rock that rises almost sheer from the ground. How he got there it is not easy to say, but he can not be reached either from above or below. Short ladders, ropes and sticks show that attempts have been made to save the unknown person, but without success.

It seems that the unhappy man has been in that desperate position a long time. A considerable crowd has already collected, extremely varied in composition. There are vendors of cold drinks; there is a whole little bar behind which the bartender skips about out of breath and perspiring—he has more on his hands than he can attend to; there are peddlers selling picture postal-cards, coral beads, souvenirs, and all sorts of trash. One fellow is stubbornly trying to dispose of a tortoise-shell comb, which is really not tortoise-shell. Tourists keep pouring in from all sides, attracted by the report that a catastrophe is impending—Englishmen, Americans, Germans, Russians, Frenchmen, Italians, etc., with all their peculiar national traits of character, manner and dress. Nearly all carry alpenstocks, field-glasses and cameras. The conversation is in different languages, all of which for the convenience of the reader, we shall translate into English.

At the foot of the rock where the unknown man is to fall, two policemen are chasing the children away and partitioning off a space, drawing a rope around short stakes stuck in the ground. It is noisy and jolly.

POLICEMAN—Get away, you loafer! The man'll fall on your head and then your mother and father will be making a hulla-baloo about it.

BOY—Will he fall here?

POLICEMAN—Yes, here.

BOY—Suppose he drops farther?

SECOND POLICEMAN—The boy is right. He may get desperate and jump, land beyond the rope and hit some people in the crowd. I guess he weighs at least about two hundred pounds.

FIRST POLICEMAN—Move on, move on, you! Where are you going? Is that your daughter, lady? Please take her away! The young man will soon fall.

LADY—Soon? Did you say he is going to fall soon? Oh, heavens, and my husband's not here!

LITTLE GIRL—He's in the café, mamma.

LADY (*desperately*)—Yes, of course. He's always in the café. Go call him, Nellie. Tell him the man will soon drop. Hurry! Hurry!

VOICES—Waiter!—Garçon—Kellner—Three beers out here!—No beer?—What?—Say, that's a fine bar—We'll have some in a moment—Hurry up—Waiter!—Waiter!—Garçon!

FIRST POLICEMAN—Say, boy, you're here again?

BOY—I wanted to take the stone away.

POLICEMAN—What for?

BOY—So he shouldn't get hurt so badly when he falls.

SECOND POLICEMAN—The boy is right. We ought to remove the stone. We ought to clear the place altogether. Isn't there any sawdust or sand about? [*Two English Tourists enter. They look at the unknown man through field-glasses and exchange remarks.*]

FIRST TOURIST—He's young.

SECOND TOURIST—How old?

FIRST TOURIST—Twenty-eight.

SECOND TOURIST—Twenty-six. Fright has made him look older.

FIRST TOURIST—How much will you bet?

SECOND TOURIST—Ten to a hundred. Put it down.

FIRST TOURIST (*writing in his notebook. To the Policeman*)—How did he get up there? Why don't they take him off?

POLICEMAN—They tried, but they couldn't. Our ladders are too short.

SECOND TOURIST—Has he been here long?

POLICEMAN—Two days.

FIRST TOURIST—Aha! He'll drop at night.

SECOND TOURIST—In two hours. A hundred to a hundred.

FIRST TOURIST—Put it down. (*He shouts to the MAN on the rock.*) How are you feeling? What? I can't hear you.

UNKNOWN MAN (*in a scarcely audible voice*)—Bad, very bad.

LADY—Oh, heavens, and my husband is not here!

LITTLE GIRL (*running in*)—Papa said he'll get here in plenty of time. He's playing chess.

LADY—Oh, heavens! Nellie, tell him he must come. I insist. But perhaps I had rather— Will he fall soon, Mr. Policeman? No? Nellie, you go. I'll stay here and keep the place for papa. (*A tall, lanky WOMAN of unusually independent and military appearance and a TOURIST dispute for the same place. The TOURIST, a short, quiet, rather weak man, feebly defends his rights; the WOMAN is resolute and aggressive.*)

TOURIST—But, lady, it is my place. I have been standing here for two hours.

MILITARY WOMAN—What do I care how long you have been standing here. I want this place. Do you understand? It offers a good view, and that's just what I want. Do you understand?

TOURIST (*weakly*)—It's what I want, too.

MILITARY WOMAN—I beg your pardon, what do you know about these things anyway?

TOURIST—What knowledge is required? A man will fall. That's all.

MILITARY WOMAN (*mimicking*)—"A man will fall. That's all." Won't you have the goodness to tell me whether you have ever seen a man fall? No? Well, I did. Not one, but three. Two acrobats, one rope-walker and three aeronauts.

TOURIST—That makes six.

MILITARY WOMAN (*mimicking*)—"That makes six." Say, you are a mathematical prodigy. And did you ever see a tiger tear a woman to pieces in a zoo, right before your

eyes? Eh? What? Yes, exactly. Now, I did— Please! Please! (*The TOURIST steps aside, shrugging his shoulders with an air of injury, and the tall woman triumphantly takes possession of the stone she has won by her prowess. She sits down, spreading out around her her bag, handkerchief, peppermints, and medicine bottle, takes off her gloves and wipes her field-glass, glancing pleasantly on all around. Finally she turns to the LADY who is waiting for her husband in the café.*)

MILITARY WOMAN (*amiably*)—You will tire yourself out, dear. Why don't you sit down?

LADY—Oh, my, don't talk about it. My legs are as stiff as that rock there.

MILITARY WOMAN—Men are so rude nowadays. They will never give their place to a woman. Have you brought peppermints with you?

LADY (*frightened*)—No. Why? Is it necessary?

MILITARY WOMAN—When you keep looking up a long time you are bound to get sick. Sure thing. Have you spirits of ammonia? No? Good gracious, how thoughtless! How will they bring you back to consciousness when he falls? You haven't any smelling salts either, I dare say. Of course not. Have you anybody to take care of you, seeing that you are so helpless yourself?

LADY (*frightened*)—I will tell my husband. He is in the café.

MILITARY WOMAN—Your husband is a brute.

POLICEMAN—Whose coat is this? Who threw this rag here?

BOY—It's mine. I spread my coat there so that he doesn't hurt himself so badly when he falls.

POLICEMAN—Take it away. (*Two TOURISTS armed with cameras contending for the same position.*)

FIRST TOURIST—I wanted this place.

SECOND TOURIST—You wanted it, but I got it.

FIRST TOURIST—You just came here. I have had this place for two days.

SECOND TOURIST—Then why did you go without even leaving your shadow?

FIRST TOURIST—I wasn't going to starve myself to death.

COMB-VENDER (*mysteriously*)—Tortoise-shell.

TOURIST (*savagely*)—Well?

VENDOR—Genuine tortoise-shell.

TOURIST—Go to the devil.

THIRD TOURIST, PHOTOGRAPHER—For heaven's sake, lady, you're sitting on my camera!

LITTLE LADY—Oh! Where is it?

TOURIST—Under you, under you, lady.

LITTLE LADY—I am so tired. What a wretched camera you have. I thought it felt uncomfortable and I was wondering why. Now I know; I am sitting on your camera.

TOURIST (*agonized*)—Lady!

LITTLE LADY—I thought it was a stone. I saw something lying there and I thought: A queer-looking stone; I wonder why it's so black. So that's what it was; it was your camera. I see.

TOURIST (*agonized*)—Lady, for heaven's sake!

LITTLE LADY—Why is it so large, tell me. Cameras are small, but this one is so large. I swear I never had the faintest suspicion it was a camera. Can you take my picture? I would so much like to have my picture taken with the mountains here for a background, in this wonderful setting.

TOURIST—How can I take your picture if you are sitting on my camera?

LITTLE LADY (*jumping up, frightened*)—Is it possible? You don't say so. Why didn't you tell me so? Does it take pictures?

VOICES—Waiter, one beer!—What did you bring wine for?—I gave you my order long ago.—What will you have, sir?—One minute.—In a second. Waiter!—Waiter—Toothpicks!—(*A fat TOURIST enters in haste, panting, surrounded by a numerous family.*)

TOURIST (*crying*)—Mary! Aleck! Jimmie!—Where is Mary? For God's sake! Where is Mary?

STUDENT (*dismally*)—Here she is, papa.

TOURIST—Where is she? Mary!

GIRL—Here I am, papa.

TOURIST—Where in the world are you? (*He turns around*) Ah, there! What are you standing back of me for? Look, look! For goodness' sake, where are you looking?

GIRL (*dismally*)—I don't know, papa.

TOURIST—No, that's impossible. Imagine! She never once saw a lightning flash. She always keeps her eyes open as wide as onions, but the instant it flashes she closes them. So she never saw lightning, not once. Mary, you are missing it again. There it is! You see!

STUDENT—She sees, papa.

TOURIST—Keep an eye on her. (*Suddenly dropping into tone of profound pity.*) Ah, poor young man. Imagine! He'll fall from that high rock. Look, children, see how pale he is! That should be a lesson to you how dangerous climbing is.

STUDENT (*dismally*)—He won't fall to-day, papa!

SECOND GIRL—Papa, Mary has closed her eyes again.

FIRST STUDENT—Let us sit down, papa! Upon my word, he won't fall to-day. The porter told me so. I can't stand it any more. You've been dragging us about every day from morning till night visiting art galleries.

TOURIST—What's that? For whose benefit am I doing this? Do you think I enjoy spending my time with a dunce?

SECOND GIRL—Papa, Mary is blinking her eyes.

SECOND STUDENT—I can't stand it either. I have terrible dreams. Yesterday I dreamed of *garçons* the whole night long.

TOURIST—Jimmie!

FIRST STUDENT—I have gotten so thin I am nothing but skin and bones. I can't stand it any more, father. I'd rather be a farmer, or tend pigs.

TOURIST—Aleck!

FIRST STUDENT—If he were really to fall—but it's a fake. You believe every lie told you! They all lie. Baedeker lies, too. Yes, your Baedeker lies!

MARY (*dismally*)—Papa, children, he's beginning to fall. (*The MAN on the rock shouts something down into the crowd. There is general commotion. (Voices.) "Look, he's falling!" Field-glasses are raised; the PHOTOGRAPHERS, violently agitated, click their cameras; the POLICEMEN diligently clean the place where he is to fall.*)

PHOTOGRAPHER—Oh, hang it! What is the matter with me? The devil! When a man's in a hurry—

SECOND PHOTOGRAPHER—Brother, your camera is closed.

PHOTOGRAPHER—The devil take it!

VOICES—Hush! He's getting ready to fall.—No, he's saying something.—No, he's falling.—Hush!

UNKNOWN MAN ON THE ROCK (*faintly*)—Save me! Save me!

TOURIST—Ah, poor young man. Mary, Jimmie, there's a tragedy for you! The sky is clear, the weather is beautiful, and he has to fall and be shattered to death? Can you realize how dreadful that is, Aleck?

STUDENT (*wearily*)—Yes, I can realize it.

TOURIST—Mary, can you realize it? Imagine. There is the sky. There are people enjoying themselves and partaking of refreshments. Everything is so nice and pleasant, and he has to fall. What a tragedy! Do you remember Hamlet?

SECOND GIRL (prompting)—Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, of Elsinore.

JAMES—Of Helsingfors, I know. Don't bother me, father!

MARY (dismally)—He dreamed about garçons all night long.

ALECK—Why don't you order sandwiches, father.

COMB-VENDER (mysteriously)—Tortoise-shell. Genuine tortoise-shell.

TOURIST (credulously)—Stolen?

VENDER—Why, sir, the idea!

TOURIST (angrily)—Do you mean to tell me it's genuine if it isn't stolen? Go on. Not much.

MILITARY WOMAN (amiably)—Are all these your children?

TOURIST—Yes, madam. A father's duty. You see, they are protesting. It is the eternal conflict between fathers and children. Here is such a tragedy going on, such a heart-rending tragedy—Mary, you are blinking your eyes again.

MILITARY WOMAN—You are quite right. Children must be hardened to things. But why do you call this a terrible tragedy? Every roofer, when he falls, falls from a great height. But this here—what is it? A hundred, two hundred feet. I saw a man fall plumb from the sky.

TOURIST (overwhelmed)—You don't say?

ALECK—Children, listen. Plumb from the sky.

MILITARY WOMAN—Yes, yes. I saw an aeronaut drop from the clouds and go crash upon an iron roof.

TOURIST—How terrible!

MILITARY WOMAN—That's what I call a tragedy. It took two hours to bring me back to consciousness, and all that time they pumped water on me, the scoundrels. I was nearly drowned. From that day on I never step out of the door without taking spirits of ammonia with me. (*Enter a strolling troop of Italian singers and musicians: a short, fat tenor, with a reddish beard and large, watery, stupidly-dreamy eyes, singing with extraordinary sweetness; a skinny hump-back with a jockey cap, and a screeching baritone; a bass who is also a mandolinist, looking like a bandit; a girl with a violin, closing her eyes when she plays, so that only the whites are seen. They take their stand and begin to sing: "Sul mare lucica—Santa Lucia, Santa Lucia—"*)

MARY (dismally)—Papa, children, look. He is beginning to wave his hands.

TOURIST—Is that the effect the music has upon him?

MILITARY WOMAN—Quite possible.

Music usually goes with such things. But that'll make him fall sooner than he should. Musicians, go away from here! Go! (*A TALL TOURIST, with up-curved mustache, violently gesticulating, enters, followed by a small group attracted by curiosity.*)

TALL TOURIST—It's scandalous. Why don't they save him? Ladies and gentlemen, you all heard him shout: "Save me!" Didn't you?

THE CURIOUS (*in chorus*)—Yes, yes, we heard him.

TALL TOURIST—There you are. I distinctly heard these words: "Save me! Why don't they save me?" It's scandalous. Policemen, policemen! Why don't you save him? What are you doing there?

POLICEMEN—We are cleaning up the place for him to fall.

TALL TOURIST—That's a sensible thing to do, too. But why don't you save him? You ought to save him. If a man asks you to save him, it is absolutely essential to save him. Isn't it so, ladies and gentlemen?

THE CURIOUS (*in chorus*)—True, absolutely true. It is essential to save him.

TALL TOURIST (*with heat*)—We are not heathens, we are Christians. We should love our neighbours. When a man asks to be saved every measure which the government has at its command should be taken to save him. Policemen, have you taken every measure?

POLICEMEN—Every one!

TALL TOURIST—Every one without exception? Gentlemen, every measure has been taken. Listen, young man, every measure has been taken to save you. Did you hear?

UNKNOWN MAN (*in a scarcely audible voice*)—Save me!

TALL TOURIST (*excitedly*)—Gentlemen, did you hear? He again asked to be saved. Policemen, did you hear?

ONE OF THE CURIOUS (*timidly*)—It is my opinion that it is absolutely necessary to save him.

TALL TOURIST—That's right. Exactly. Why, that's what I have been saying for the last two hours. Policemen, do you hear? It is scandalous.

ONE OF THE CURIOUS (*a little bolder*)—It is my opinion that an appeal should be made to the highest authority.

THE REST (*in chorus*)—Yes, yes, a complaint should be made. It is scandalous. The Government ought not to leave any of its citizens in danger. We all pay taxes. He must be saved.

TALL TOURIST—Didn't I say so? Of

course we must put up a complaint. Young man! Listen! Listen, young man. Do you pay taxes? What? I can't hear.

TOURIST—Jimmie, Katie, listen! What a tragedy! Ah, the poor young man! He is soon to fall and they ask him to pay a domiciliary tax.

KATE (*the girl with glasses, pedantically*)—That can hardly be called a domicile, father. The meaning of domicile is—

JAMES (*pinching her*)—Licksplittle.

MARY (*wearily*)—Papa, children, look! He's again beginning to fall. (*There is excitement in the crowd, and again a bustling and shouting among the PHOTOGRAPHERS.*)

TALL TOURIST—We must hurry, ladies and gentlemen. He must be saved at any cost. Who's going with me?

THE CURIOUS (*in chorus*)—We are all going! We are all going!

TALL TOURIST—Policemen, did you hear? Come, ladies and gentlemen! (*They depart, fiercely gesticulating. The café grows more lively. The sound of clinking beer glasses and the clatter of steins is heard, and the beginning of a loud German song. The bartender, who has forgotten himself while talking to somebody, starts suddenly and runs off, looks up to the sky with a hopeless air and wipes the perspiration from his face with his napkin. Angry calls of Waiter! Waiter!*)

UNKNOWN MAN (*rather loudly*)—Can you let me have some soda water? (*The WAITER is startled, looks at the sky, glances at the man on the rock, and pretending not to have heard him, walks away.*)

MANY VOICES—Waiter! Beer!

WAITER—One moment, one moment! (*Two drunken men come out from the café.*)

LADY—Ah, there is my husband. Come here quick.

MILITARY WOMAN—A downright brute.

DRUNKEN MAN (*waving his hand to the UNKNOWN MAN*)—Say, is it very bad up there? Hey?

UNKNOWN MAN (*rather loudly*)—Yes, it's bad. I am sick and tired of it.

DRUNKEN MAN—Can't you get a drink?

UNKNOWN MAN—No, how can I?

SECOND DRUNKEN MAN—Say, what are you talking about? How can he get a drink? The man is about to die and you tempt him and try to get him excited. Listen, up there, we have been drinking your health right along. It won't hurt you, will it?

FIRST DRUNKEN MAN—Ah, go on! What are you talking about? How can it hurt him? Why, it will only do him good. It will encourage him. Listen, honest to God, we are very sorry for you, but don't mind

us. We are going to the café to have another drink. Good-by.

SECOND DRUNKEN MAN—Look, what a crowd.

FIRST DRUNKEN MAN—Come, or he'll fall and then they'll close the café. (*Enter a new crowd of tourists, a very elegant gentleman, the chief CORRESPONDENT of European newspapers at their head. He is followed by an ecstatic whisper of respect and admiration. Many leave the café to look at him, and even the WAITER turns slightly around, glances at him quickly, smiles happily and continues on his way, spilling something from his tray.*)

VOICES—The correspondent! The correspondent! Look!

LADY—Oh, my, and my husband is gone again!

TOURIST—Jimmie, Mary, Aleck, Katie, Charlie, look! This is the chief correspondent. Do you realize it? The very highest of all. Whatever he writes, goes.

KATE—Mary, dear, again you are not looking.

ALECK—I wish you would order some sandwiches for us. I can't stand it any longer. A human being has to eat.

TOURIST (*ecstatically*)—What a tragedy! Katie, dear, can you realize it? Consider how awful. The weather is so beautiful, and the chief correspondent. Take out your note-book, Jimmie.

JAMES—I lost it, father.

CORRESPONDENT—Where is he?

VOICES (*obligingly*)—There, there he is. There! A little higher. Still higher! A little lower! No, higher!

CORRESPONDENT—If you please, if you please, ladies and gentlemen, I will find him myself. Oh, yes, there he is. Hm! What a situation!

TOURIST—Won't you have a chair?

CORRESPONDENT—Thank you. (*Sits down.*) Hm! What a situation! Very interesting. Very interesting, indeed! (*Whisks out his note-book; amiably, to the PHOTOGRAPHERS:*) Have you taken any pictures yet, gentlemen?

FIRST PHOTOGRAPHER—Yes, sir, certainly, certainly. We have photographed the place showing the general character of the locality—

SECOND PHOTOGRAPHER—The tragic situation of the young man—

CORRESPONDENT—Ye-es, very, very interesting.

TOURIST—Did you hear, Aleck? This smart man, the chief correspondent, says it's interesting, and you keep bothering about sandwiches. Duncel!

ALECK—Maybe he has had his dinner already.

CORRESPONDENT—Ladies and gentlemen, I beg you to be quiet.

OBLIGING VOICES—It is quieter in the café.

CORRESPONDENT (*shouts to the UNKNOWN MAN*)—Permit me to introduce myself. I am the chief correspondent of the European press. I have been sent here at the special request of the editors. I should like to ask you several questions concerning your situation. What is your name? What is your general position? How old are you? (*The UNKNOWN MAN mumbles something.*)

CORRESPONDENT (*a little puzzled*)—I can't hear a thing. Has he been that way all the time?

VOICE—Yes, it's impossible to hear a word he says.

CORRESPONDENT (*jotting down something in his note-book*)—Fine! Are you a bachelor? (*The UNKNOWN MAN mumbles.*) I can't hear you. Are you married? Yes?

TOURIST—He said he was a bachelor.

SECOND TOURIST—No, he didn't. Of course, he's married.

CORRESPONDENT (*carelessly*)—You think so? All right. We'll put down, married. How many children have you? Can't hear. It seems to me he said three. Hm! Anyway, we'll put down five.

TOURIST—Oh, my, what a tragedy. Five children! Imagine!

MILITARY WOMAN—He is lying.

CORRESPONDENT (*shouting*)—How did you get into this position? What? I can't hear? Louder! Repeat. What did you say? (*Perplexed, to the crowd.*) What did he say? The fellow has a devilishly weak voice.

FIRST TOURIST—It seems to me he said that he lost his way.

SECOND TOURIST—No, he doesn't know himself how he got there.

VOICES—He was out hunting.—He was climbing up the rocks.—No, no! He is simply a lunatic!

CORRESPONDENT—I beg your pardon, I beg your pardon, ladies and gentlemen! Anyway, he didn't drop from the sky. However— (*He quickly jots down in his note-book.*) Unhappy young man—suffering from childhood with attacks of lunacy.—The bright light of the full moon—the wild rocks.—Sleepy janitor—didn't notice—

FIRST TOURIST (*to the second, in a whisper*)—But it's a new moon now.

SECOND TOURIST—Get out, what does a layman know about astronomy.

TOURIST (*ecstatically*)—Mary, pay attention to this! You have before you an ocular demonstration of the influence of the moon on living organisms. What a terrible tragedy to go out walking on a moonlit night and find suddenly that you have climbed to a place where it is impossible to climb down or be taken down.

CORRESPONDENT (*shouting*)—What feelings are you experiencing? I can't hear. Louder! Ah, so! Well, well! What a situation!

CROWD (*interested*)—Listen, listen! Let's hear what his feelings are. How terrible!

CORRESPONDENT (*writes in his note-book, tossing out detached remarks*)—Mortal terror numbs his limbs.—A cold shiver goes down his spinal column.—No hope—before his mental vision rises a picture of family bliss: Wife making sandwiches; his five children innocently lisping their love.—Grandma in the arm-chair with a tube to her ear, that is, grandpa in the arm-chair, with a tube to his ear and grandma.—Deeply moved by the sympathy of the public.—His last wish before his death that the words he uttered with his last breath should be published in our newspapers—

MILITARY WOMAN (*indignantly*)—My! He lies like a salesman.

MARY (*wearily*)—Papa, children, look, he is starting to fall again.

TOURIST (*angrily*)—Don't bother me. Such a tragedy is unfolding itself right before your very eyes—and you—What are you making such big eyes for again?

CORRESPONDENT (*shouting*)—Hold on fast. That's it! My last question: What message do you wish to leave for your fellow citizens before you depart for the better world?

UNKNOWN MAN—That they may all go to the devil.

CORRESPONDENT—What? Hm, yes— (*He writes quickly.*) Ardent love—is a staunch opponent of the law granting equal right to negroes. His last words: "Let the black niggers—"

PASTOR (*out of breath, pushing through the crowd*)—Where is he? Ah, where is he? Ah, there! Poor young man. Has there been no clergyman here yet? No? Thank you. Am I the first?

CORRESPONDENT (*writes*)—A touching dramatic moment.—A minister has arrived.—All are trembling on the verge of suspense. Many are shedding tears—

PASTOR—Excuse me, excuse me! Ladies and gentlemen, a lost soul wishes to make its peace with God— (*He shouts.*) My son

don't you wish to make your peace with God? Confess your sins to me. I will grant you remission at once! What? I cannot hear.

CORRESPONDENT (*writes*)—The air is shaken with the people's groans. The minister of the church exhorts the criminal, that is, the unfortunate man, in touching language.—The unfortunate creature with tears in his eyes thanks him in a faint voice—

UNKNOWN MAN (*faintly*)—If you won't go away I will jump on your head. I weigh three hundred pounds. (*All jump away frightened behind each other.*)

VOICES—He is falling! He is falling!

TOURIST (*agitatedly*)—Mary, Aleck, Jimmie!

POLICEMEN (*energetically*)—Clear the place, please! Move on!

LADY—Nellie, go quick and tell your father he is falling.

PHOTOGRAPHER (*in despair*)—Oh my, I am out of films (*throws madly about, looking pitifully at the UNKNOWN MAN*). One minute, I'll go and get them. I have some in my overcoat pocket over there. (*He walks a short distance, keeping his eyes fixed on the UNKNOWN MAN, and then returns.*) I can't; I am afraid I'll miss it. Good heavens! They are over there in my overcoat. Just one minute, please. I'll fetch them right away. What a fix!

PASTOR—Hurry, my friend. Pull yourself together and try to hold out long enough to tell me at least your principal sins. You needn't mention the lesser ones.

TOURIST—What a tragedy!

CORRESPONDENT (*writes*)—The criminal, that is, the unhappy man, makes a public confession and does penance. Terrible secrets revealed. He is a bank robber—blew up safes.

TOURIST (*credulously*)—The scoundrel.

PASTOR (*shouts*)—In the first place, have you killed? Secondly, have you stolen? Thirdly, have you committed adultery?

TOURIST—Mary, Jimmie, Katie, Aleck, Charlie, close your ears.

CORRESPONDENT (*writing*)—Tremendous excitement in the crowd.—Shouts of indignation.

PASTOR (*hurriedly*)—Fourthly, have you blasphemed? Fifthly, have you coveted your neighbour's ass, his ox, his slave, his wife? Sixthly—

PHOTOGRAPHER (*alarmed*)—Ladies and gentlemen, an ass!

SECOND PHOTOGRAPHER—Where? I can't see it!

PHOTOGRAPHER (*calmed*)—I thought I heard it.

PASTOR—I congratulate you, my son! I congratulate you! You have made your peace with God. Now you may rest easy—Oh, God, what do I see? The Salvation Army! Policeman, chase them away! (*Enter a Salvation Army band, men and women in uniforms. There are only three instruments, a drum, a violin and a piercingly-shrill trumpet.*)

SALVATION ARMY MAN (*frantically beating his drum and shouting in a nasal voice*)—Brethren and sisters—

PASTOR (*shouting even louder in a still more nasal voice in an effort to drown the other's*)—He has already confessed. Bear witness, ladies and gentlemen, that he has confessed and made his peace with heaven.

SALVATION ARMY WOMAN (*climbing on a rock and shrieking*)—I once wandered in the dark just as this sinner and I lived a bad life and was a drunkard, but when the light of truth—

A VOICE—Why, she is drunk now.

PASTOR—Policeman, didn't he confess and make his peace with heaven? (*The SALVATION ARMY MAN continues to beat his drum frantically; the rest begin to draw a song. Shouts, laughter, whistling. Singing in the café, and calls of "Waiter!" in all languages. The bewildered POLICEMEN tear themselves away from the PASTOR, who is pulling them somewhere; the PHOTOGRAPHERS turn and twist about as if the seats were burning under them. An English lady comes riding in on a donkey, who, stopping suddenly, sprawls out his legs and refuses to go farther, adding his noise to the rest. Gradually the noise subsides. The Salvation Army band solemnly withdraws, and the PASTOR, waving his hands, follows them.*)

FIRST ENGLISH TOURIST (*to the other*)—How impolite! This crowd doesn't know how to behave itself.

SECOND ENGLISH TOURIST—Come, let's go away from here.

FIRST ENGLISH TOURIST—One minute. (*He shouts.*) Listen, won't you hurry up and fall?

SECOND ENGLISH TOURIST—What are you saying, Sir William?

FIRST ENGLISH TOURIST (*shouting*)—Don't you see that's what they are waiting for? As a gentleman you should grant them this pleasure and so escape the humiliation of undergoing tortures before this mob.

SECOND ENGLISH TOURIST—Sir William!

TOURIST (*ecstatically*)—See? It's true. Aleck, Jimmie, it's true. What a tragedy!

SEVERAL TOURISTS (*going for the Englishman*)—How dare you?

FIRST TOURIST (*shoving them aside*)—Hurry up and fall! Do you hear? If you haven't the backbone I'll help you out with a pistol shot.

VOICES—That red-haired devil has gone clear out of his mind.

POLICEMAN (*seizing the Englishman's hand*)—You have no right to do it, it's against the law. I'll arrest you.

SOME TOURISTS—A barbarous nation! (*THE UNKNOWN MAN shouts something. Excitement below.*)

VOICES—Hear, hear, hear!

UNKNOWN MAN (*aloud*)—Take that jack-ass away to the devil. He wants to shoot me. And tell the boss that I can't stand it any longer.

VOICES—What's that? What boss? He is losing his mind, the poor man.

TOURIST—Aleck! Mary! This is a mad scene. Jimmie, you remember Hamlet? Quick!

UNKNOWN MAN (*angrily*)—Tell him my spinal column is broken.

MARY (*wearily*)—Papa, children, he's beginning to kick with his legs.

KATE—Is that what is called convulsions, papa?

TOURIST (*rapturously*)—I don't know. I think it is. What a tragedy?

ALECK (*glumly*)—You fool! You keep cramming and cramming and you don't know that the right name for that is agony. And you wear eyeglasses, too. I can't bear it any longer, papa.

TOURIST—Think of it, children. A man is about to fall down to his death and he is bothering about his spinal column. (*There is a noise. A man in a white vest, very much frightened, enters, almost dragged by angry tourists. He smiles, bows on all sides, stretches out his arms, now running forward as he is pushed, now trying to escape in the crowd, but is seized and pulled again.*)

VOICES—A bare-faced deception! It is an outrage. Policeman, Policeman, he must be taught a lesson!

OTHER VOICES—What is it? What deception? What is it all about? They have caught a thief!

THE MAN IN THE WHITE VEST (*bowing and smiling*)—It's a joke, ladies and gentlemen, a joke, that's all. The people were bored, so I wanted to provide a little amusement for them.

UNKNOWN MAN (*angrily*)—Boss!

THE MAN IN THE WHITE VEST—Wait a while, wait a while.

UNKNOWN MAN—Do you expect me to stay here until the Second Advent? The agreement was till twelve o'clock. What time is it now?

TALL TOURIST (*indignantly*)—Do you hear, ladies and gentlemen? This scoundrel, this man here in the white vest hired that other scoundrel up there and just simply tied him to the rock.

VOICES—Is he tied?

TALL TOURIST—Yes, he is tied and he can't fall. We are excited and worrying, but he couldn't fall even if he tried.

UNKNOWN MAN—What else do you want? Do you think I am going to break my neck for your measly ten dollars? Boss, I can't stand it any more. One man wanted to shoot me. The pastor preached me for two hours. This is not in the agreement.

ALECK—Father, I told you that Baedeker lies. You believe everything anybody tells you and drag us about without eating.

MAN IN THE WHITE VEST—The people were bored. My only desire was to amuse the people.

MILITARY WOMAN—What is the matter? I don't understand a thing. Why isn't he going to fall? Who, then, is going to fall?

TOURIST—I don't understand a thing, either. Of course he's got to fall!

JAMES—You never understand anything, father. Weren't you told that he's tied to the rock?

ALECK—You can't convince him. He loves every Baedeker more than his own children.

JAMES—A nice father!

TOURIST—Silence!

MILITARY WOMAN—What is the matter? He must fall.

TALL TOURIST—The idea! What a deception. You'll have to explain this.

MAN IN THE WHITE VEST—The people were bored. Excuse me, ladies and gentlemen, but wishing to accommodate you—give you a few hours of pleasant excitement—elevate your spirits—inspire you with altruistic sentiments—

ENGLISHMAN—Is the café yours?

MAN IN THE WHITE VEST—Yes.

ENGLISHMAN—And is the hotel below also yours?

MAN IN THE WHITE VEST—Yes. The people were bored—

CORRESPONDENT (*writing*)—The proprietor of the café, desiring to increase his profits from the sale of alcoholic beverages,

exploits the best human sentiments.—The people's indignation—

UNKNOWN MAN (*angrily*)—Boss, will you have me taken off at once or won't you?

HOTEL KEEPER—What do you want up there? Aren't you satisfied? Didn't I have you taken off at night?

UNKNOWN MAN—Well, I should say so. You think I'd be hanging here nights, too?

HOTEL KEEPER—Then you can stand it a few minutes longer. The people are bored—

TALL TOURIST—Say, have you any idea of what you have done? Do you realize the enormity of it? You are scoundrels, who for your own sordid personal ends have impiously exploited the finest human sentiment, love of one's neighbour. You have caused us to undergo fear and suffering. You have poisoned our hearts with pity. And now, what is the upshot of it all? The upshot is that this scamp, your vile accomplice, is bound to the rock and not only will he not fall as everybody expects, but he *can't*.

MILITARY WOMAN—What is the matter? He has got to fall.

TOURIST—Policeman! Policeman! (*The PASTOR enters, out of breath.*)

PASTOR—What? Is he still living? Oh, there he is! What fakirs those Salvationists are.

VOICES—Don't you know that he is bound?

PASTOR—Bound! Bound to what? To life? Well, we are all bound to life until death snaps the cord. But whether he is bound or not bound, I reconciled him with heaven, and that's enough. But those fakirs—

TOURIST—Policeman! Policeman, you must draw up an official report. There is no way out of it.

MILITARY WOMAN (*going for the HOTEL KEEPER*)—I will not allow myself to be fooled. I saw an aeronaut drop from the clouds and go crash upon a roof. I saw a tiger tear a woman to pieces—

PHOTOGRAPHER—I spoiled three films photographing that scamp. You will have to answer for this, sir. I will hold you responsible.

TOURIST—An official report! An official report! Such a bare-faced deception. Mary, Jimmie, Aleck, Charlie, call a policeman!

HOTEL KEEPER (*drawing back, in despair*)—But, I can't make him fall if he doesn't want to. I did everything in my power, ladies and gentlemen!

MILITARY WOMAN—I will not allow it.

HOTEL KEEPER—Excuse me. I promise you on my word of honour that the next time he will fall. But he doesn't want to, to-day.

UNKNOWN MAN—What's that? What did you say about the next time?

HOTEL KEEPER—You shut up there!

UNKNOWN MAN—For ten dollars?

PASTOR—Pray, what impudence! I just made his peace with heaven when he was in danger of his life. You have heard him threatening to fall on my head, haven't you? And still he is dissatisfied. Adulterer, thief, murderer, coveter of your neighbour's ass—

PHOTOGRAPHER—Ladies and gentlemen, an ass!

SECOND PHOTOGRAPHER—Where, where is an ass?

PHOTOGRAPHER (*calmed*)—I thought I heard one.

SECOND PHOTOGRAPHER—It is you who are an ass. I have become cross-eyed on account of your shouting: "An ass! An ass!"

MARY (*wearily*)—Papa, children, look! A policeman is coming. (*Excitement and noise. On one side a crowd pulling a POLICEMAN, on the other the HOTEL KEEPER; both keep crying: "Excuse me! Excuse me!"*)

TOURIST—Policeman, there he is, the fakir, the swindler.

PASTOR—Policeman, there he is, the adulterer, the murderer, the coveter of his neighbour's ass—

POLICEMAN—Excuse me, excuse me, ladies and gentlemen. We will bring him to his senses in short order and make him confess.

HOTEL KEEPER—I can't make him fall if he doesn't want to.

POLICEMAN—Hey, you, young man out there! Can you fall or can't you? Confess!

UNKNOWN MAN (*sullenly*)—I don't want to fall!

VOICES—Aha, he has confessed. What a scoundrel!

TALL TOURIST—Write down what I dictate, policeman—"Desiring—for the sake of gain to exploit the sentiment of love of one's neighbour—the sacred feeling—a-a-a—"

TOURIST—Listen, children, they are drawing up an official report. What exquisite choice of language!

TALL TOURIST—"The sacred feeling which—"

POLICEMAN (*writing with painful effort, his tongue stuck out*)—Love of one's neighbour—the sacred feeling which—

MARY (wearily)—Papa, children, look! An advertisement is coming. (*Enter musicians with trumpets and drums, a man at their head carrying on a long pole a huge placard with the picture of an absolutely bald head, and printed underneath: "I was bald."*)

UNKNOWN MAN—Too late. They are drawing up a report here. You had better clear out!

THE MAN CARRYING THE POLE (*stopping and speaking in a loud voice*)—I had been bald from the day of my birth and for a long time thereafter. That miserable growth, which in my tenth year covered my scalp was more like wool than real hair. When I was married my skull was as bare as a pillow and my young bride—

TOURIST—What a tragedy! Newly married and with such a head! Can you realize how dreadful that is, children? (*All listen with interest, even the POLICEMAN stopping in his arduous task and inclining his ear with his pen in his hand.*)

THE MAN CARRYING THE POLE (*solemnly*)—And the time came when my matrimonial happiness literally hung by a hair. All the medicines recommended by quacks to make my hair grow—

TOURIST—Your note-book, Jimmie.

MILITARY WOMAN—But when is he going to fall?

HOTEL KEEPER (*amiably*)—The next time, lady, the next time. I won't tie him so hard—you understand?

(*Curtain*)

The Devil's Thoughts

By SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

[*"The three first stanzas, which are worth all the rest, and the ninth, were dictated by Mr. Southey. Between the ninth and the concluding stanza, two or three are omitted."*—S. T. C. in 1829.]

FROM his brimstone bed at break of day
A walking the DEVIL is gone,
To visit his snug little farm of the earth
And see how his stock went on.

Over the hill and over the dale,
And he went over the plain,
And backward and forward he swished his
long tail
As a gentleman swishes his cane.

And how then was the Devil drest?
Oh! he was in his Sunday's best:
His jacket was red and his breeches were
blue,
And there was a hole where the tail came
through.

He saw a LAWYER killing a Viper
On a dung heap beside his stable,
And the Devil smiled, for it put him in mind
Of Cain and his brother, Abel.

A POTHECARY on a white horse
Rode by on his vocations,
And the Devil thought of his old Friend
DEATH in the Revelations.

He saw a cottage with a double coach-house,
A cottage of gentility!
And the Devil did grin, for his darling sin
Is pride that apes humility.

He went into a rich bookseller's shop,
Quoth he: "We are both of one college,
For I myself sat like a cormorant once
Fast by the tree of knowledge."

Down the river there plied, with wind and
tide,
A pig with vast celerity,
And the Devil look'd wise as he saw how
the while,
It cut its own throat. "There," quoth
he with a smile,
"Goes 'England's commercial prosper-
ity.'"

As he went through Cold-Bath Fields he saw
A solitary cell;
And the Devil was pleased, for it gave him
a hint
For improving his prisons in Hell.

General —'s burning face
He saw with consternation,
And back to hell his way he did take,
For the Devil thought by a slight mistake
It was general conflagration.

How Tricotrin Saw London

By LEONARD MERRICK

Gmar Murrish



NE day Tricotrin had eighty francs, and he said to Pitou, who was no less prosperous, "Good-bye to follies, for we have arrived at an epoch in our careers! Do not let us waste our substance on trivial pleasures, or paying the landlord—let us make it a provision for our future!"

"I rejoice to hear you speak for once like a business-man," returned Pitou. "Do you recommend gilt-edged securities, or an investment in land?"

"I would suggest, rather, that we apply our riches to some educational purpose, such as travel," explained the poet, producing a railway company's handbill. "By this means we shall enlarge our minds, and somebody has pretended that 'knowledge is power'—it must have been the principal of a school. It is not for nothing that we have l'Entente Cordiale—you may now spend a Sunday in London at about the cost of one of Madeleine's hats."

"These London Sunday baits may be a plot of the English Government to exterminate us; I have read that none but English people can survive a Sunday in London."

"No, it is not that, for we are offered the choice of a town called 'Eastbourne.' Listen, they tell me that in London the price of cigarettes is so much lower than with us that, to a bold smuggler, the trip is a veritable economy. Matches too! Matches are so cheap in England that the practice of stealing them from café tables has not been introduced."

"Well, your synopsis will be considered, and reported on in due course," announced the composer, after a pause; "but at the moment of going to press we would rather buy a hat for Madeleine."

And as Madeleine also thought that this would be better for him, it was decided that Tricotrin should set forth alone.

His departure for a foreign country was a solemn event. A small party of the Montmartrois had marched with him to the station, and more than once, in view of their anxious faces, the young man acknowledged mentally that he was committed to a harebrained scheme.

"Heaven protect thee, my comrade!" faltered Pitou. "Is thy vocabulary safely in thy pocket? Remember that 'un bock' is 'glass of beer.'"

"Here is a small packet of chocolate," murmured Lajeunie, embracing him; "in England, nothing to eat can be obtained on Sunday, and chocolate is very sustaining."

"And listen!" shouted Sanquereau; "on no account take off thy hat to strangers, nor laugh in the streets; the first is 'mad' over there, and the second is 'immoral.' May le bon Dieu have thee in His keeping! We count the hours till thy return!"

Then the train sped out into the night, and the poet realized that home and friends were left behind.

He would have been less than a poet if, in the first few minutes, the pathos of the situation had not gripped him by the throat. Vague, elusive fancies stirred his brain; he remembered the franc that he owed at the Café du Bel Avenir, and wondered if madame would speak gently of him were he lost at sea. Tender memories of past loves dimmed his eyes, and he reflected how poignant it would be to perish before the papers would give him any obituary notices. Regarding his fellow passengers, he lamented that none of them was a beautiful girl, for it was an occasion on which woman's sympathy would have been sweet; indeed he proceeded to invent some of the things that they might have said to each other. Inwardly he was still resenting the faces of his travelling companions when the train reached Dieppe.

"It is material for my biography," he soliloquized, as he crept down the gangway.

"Few who saw the young man step firmly on to the good ship's deck conjectured the emotions that tore his heart; few recognized him to be Tricotrin, whose work was at that date practically unknown." But as a matter of fact he did arouse conjectures of a kind, for when the boat moved from the quay, he could not resist the opportunity to murmur, "My France, farewell!" with an appropriate gesture.

His repose during the night was fitful, and when Victoria was reached at last, he was conscious of some bodily fatigue. However, his mind was never slow to receive impressions, and at the sight of the scaffolding, he whipped out his note-book on the platform. He wrote, "The English are extraordinarily prompt of action. One day it was discerned that la gare Victoria was capable of improvement—no sooner was the fact detected than an army of contractors was feverishly enlarging it." Pleased that his journey was already yielding such good results, the poet lit a Caporal, and sauntered through the yard.

Though the sky promised a fine Sunday, his view of London at this early hour was not inspiring. He loitered blankly, debating which way to wander. Presently the outlook brightened—he observed a very dainty pair of shoes and ankles coming through the station doors. Fearing that the face might be unworthy of them, he did not venture to raise his gaze until the girl had nearly reached the gate, but when he took the risk, he was rewarded by the discovery that her features were as piquant as her feet.

She came toward him slowly, and now he remarked that she had a grudge against Fate; her pretty lips were compressed, her beautiful eyes gloomy with grievance, the fairness of her brow was darkened by a frown. "Well," mused Tricotrin, "though the object of my visit is educational, the exigencies of my situation clearly compel me to ask this young lady to direct me somewhere. Can I summon up enough English before she has passed?"

It was a trying moment, for already she was nearly abreast of him. Forgetful of Sanquereau's instructions, as well as of most of the phrases that had been committed to memory, the poet swept off his hat, and stammered, "Mees, I beg your pardon!"

She turned the aggrieved eyes to him inquiringly. Although she had paused, she made no answer. Was his accent so atrocious as all that? For a second they regarded each other dumbly, while a blush of

embarrassment mantled the young man's cheeks. Then, with a little gesture of apology, the girl said in French—

"I do not speak English, monsieur."

"Oh, le bon Dieu be praised!" cried Tricotrin, for all the world as if he had been back on the boulevard Rochechouart. "I was dazed with travel, or I should have recognized you were a Frenchwoman. Did you, too, leave Paris last night, mademoiselle?"

"Ah, no," said the girl pensively. "I have been in London for months. I hoped to meet a friend who wrote that she would arrive this morning, but"—she sighed—"she has not come!"

"She will arrive to-night instead, no doubt; I should have no anxiety. You may be certain she will arrive to-night, and this contretemps will be forgotten."

She pouted. "I was looking forward so much to seeing her! To a stranger who cannot speak the language, London is as triste as a tomb. To-day, I was to have had a companion, and now—"

"Indeed, I sympathize with you," replied Tricotrin. "But is it really so—London is what you say? You alarm me. I am here absolutely alone. Where, then, shall I go this morning?"

"There are churches," she said, after some reflection.

"And besides?"

"W-e-ll, there are other churches."

"Of course, such things can be seen in Paris also," demurred Tricotrin. "It is not essential to go abroad to say one's prayers. If I may take the liberty of applying to you, in which direction would you recommend me to turn my steps? For example, where is Soho—is it too far for a walk?"

"No, monsieur, it is not very far—it is the quarter in which I lodge."

"And do you return there now?" he asked, eagerly.

"What else is there for me to do? My friend has not come, and—"

"Mademoiselle," exclaimed the poet, "I entreat you to have mercy on a compatriot! Permit me, at least, to seek Soho in your company—do not, I implore you, leave me homeless and helpless in a strange land! I notice an eccentric vehicle which instinct whispers is an English 'hansom.' For years I have aspired to drive in an English hansom once. It is in your power to fulfil my dream with effulgence. Will you consent to instruct the acrobat who is performing with a whip, and to take a seat in the English hansom beside me?"

"Monsieur," responded the pretty girl graciously, "I shall be charmed"; and, romantic as the incident appears, the next minute they were driving along Victoria Street together.

"The good kind fairies have certainly taken me under their wings," declared Tricotrin, as he admired his companion's profile. "It was worth enduring the pangs of exile, to meet with such kindness as you have shown me."

"I am afraid you will speedily pronounce the fairies fickle," said she, "for our drive will soon be over, and you will find Soho no fairyland."

"How comes it that your place of residence is so unsuitable to you, *mademoiselle*?"

"I lodge in the neighbourhood of the coiffeur's where I am employed, monsieur—where I handle the tails and transformations. Our specialty is artificial eyelashes; the attachment is quite invisible—and the result absolutely ravishing! No," she added hurriedly; "I am not wearing a pair myself, these are quite natural, word of honour! But we undertake to impart to any eyes the gaze soulful, or the twinkle coquettish, as the customer desires—as an artist, I assure you that these expressions are due, less to the eyes themselves than to the shade, and especially the curve, of the lashes. Many a woman has entered our saloon entirely insignificant, and turned the heads of all the men in the street when she left."

"You interest me profoundly," said Tricotrin. "At the same time, I shall never know in future whether I am inspired by a woman's eyes, or the skill of her coiffeur. I say 'in future.' I entertain no doubt as to the source of my sensations now."

She rewarded him for this by a glance that dazzled him, and soon afterwards the hansom came to a standstill amid an overpowering odour of cheese.

"We have arrived!" she proclaimed; "so it is now that we part, monsieur. For me there is the little lodging—for you the enormous London. It is Soho—wander where you will! There are restaurants hereabouts where one may find coffee and rolls at a modest price. Accept my thanks for your escort, and let us say *bonjour*."

"Are the restaurants so unsavoury that you decline to honour them?" he questioned.

"*Comment!*"

"Will you not bear me company? Or, better still, will you not let me command a coffee-pot for two to be sent to your apart-

ment, and invite me to rest after my voyage?"

She hesitated. "My apartment is very humble," she said, "and—well, I have never done a thing like that! It would not be correct. What would you think of me if I consented?"

"I will think all that you would have me think," vowed Tricotrin. "Come, take pity on me! Ask me in, and afterwards we will admire the sights of London together. Where can the coffee-pot be ordered?"

"As for that," she said, "there is no necessity—I have a little breakfast for two already prepared. Enfin, it is understood—we are to be good comrades, and nothing more? Will you give yourself the trouble of entering, monsieur?"

The bedroom to which they mounted was shabby, but far from unattractive. The mantel-shelf was brightened with flowers, a piano was squeezed into a corner, and Tricotrin had scarcely put aside his hat when he was greeted by the odour of coffee as excellent as was ever served in the *Café de la Régence*.

"If this is London," he cried, "I have no fault to find with it! I own it is abominably selfish of me, but I cannot bring myself to regret that your friend failed to arrive this morning; indeed, I shudder to think what would have become of me if we had not met. Will you mention the name that is to figure in my benisons?"

"My name is Rosalie Durand, monsieur."

"And mine is Gustave Tricotrin, *mademoiselle*—always your slave. I do not doubt that in Paris, at this moment, there are men who picture me tramping the pavement, desolate. Not one of them but would envy me from his heart if he could see my situation!"

"It might have fallen out worse, I admit," said the girl. "My own day was at the point of being dull to tears—and here I am chattering as if I hadn't a grief in the world! Let me persuade you to take another *croissant*!"

"Fervently I wish that appearances were not deceptive!" said Tricotrin, who required little persuasion. "Is it indiscreet to inquire to what griefs you allude? Upon my word, your position appears a very pretty one! Where do those dainty shoes pinch you?"

"They are not easy on foreign soil, monsieur. When I reflect that you go back to-night, that to-morrow you will be again in Paris, I could gnash my teeth with jealousy."

"But, *ma foi!*" returned Tricotrin, "to a girl of brains, like yourself, Paris is always open. Are there no customers for eyelashes in France? Why condemn yourself to gnash with jealousy when there is a living to be earned at home?"

"There are several reasons," she said; "for one thing, I am an extravagant little hussy and haven't saved enough for a ticket."

"I have heard no reason yet! At the moment my pocket is nicely lined—you might return with me this evening."

"Are you mad, by any chance?" she laughed.

"It seems to me the natural course."

"Well, I should not be free to go like that even if I took your money. I am a business woman, you see, who does not sacrifice her interests to her sentiment. What is your own career, *monsieur Tricotrin*?"

"I am a poet. And when I am back in Paris I shall write verse about you. It shall be an impression of London—the great city as it reveals itself to a stranger whose eyes are dazzled by the girl he loves."

"Forbidden ground!" she cried, admonishing him with a finger. "No dazzle!"

"I apologize," said Tricotrin; "you shall find me a poet of my word. Why, I declare," he exclaimed, glancing from the window, "it has begun to rain!"

"Well, fortunately, we have plenty of time; there is all day for our excursion and we can wait for the weather to improve. If you do not object to smoking while I sing, *monsieur*, I propose a little music to go on with."

And it turned out that this singular assistant of a hairdresser had a very sympathetic voice, and no contemptible *répertoire*. Although the sky had now broken its promise shamefully and the downpour continued, Tricotrin found nothing to complain of. By midday one would have said that they had been comrades for years. By luncheon both had ceased even to regard the rain. And before evening approached, they had confided to each other their histories from the day of their birth.

Ascertaining that the basement boasted a smudgy servant girl, who was to be dispatched for *entrées* and *sauterne*, Tricotrin drew up the menu of a magnificent dinner as the climax. It was conceded that at this repast he should be the host; and having placed him on oath behind a screen, Rosalie proceeded to make an elaborate toilette in honour of his entertainment.

Determined, as he had said, to prove himself a poet of his word, the young man remained behind the screen as motionless as a waxwork, but the temptation to peep was tremendous, and at the whispering of a silk petticoat he was unable to repress a groan.

"What ails you?" she demanded, the whispering suspended.

"I merely expire with impatience to meet you again."

"*Monsieur*, I am hastening to the trysting-place. And my costume will be suitable to the occasion, believe me!"

"In that case, if you are not quick, you will have to wear crape. However, proceed. I can suffer with the best of them. . . . Are you certain that I can be of no assistance? I feel selfish, idling here like this. Besides, since I am able to see——"

"See?" she screamed.

"——see no reason why you should refuse my aid, my plight is worse still. What are you doing now?"

"My hair," she announced.

"Surely it would not be improper for me to view a head of hair?"

"Perhaps not, *monsieur*; but my head is on my shoulders—which makes a difference."

"*Mademoiselle*," sighed Tricotrin, "never have I known a young lady whose head was on her shoulders more tightly. May I crave one indulgence? My imprisonment would be less painful for a cigarette, and I cannot reach the matches—will you consent to pass them round the screen?"

"It is against the rules. But I will consent to throw them over the top. Catch! Why don't you say 'thank you'?"

"Because your unjust suspicion killed me; I now need nothing but immortelles, and at dinner I will compose my epitaph. If I am not mistaken, I already smell the soup on the stairs."

And the soup had scarcely entered when his guest presented herself. Paquin and the Fairy Godmother would have approved her gown; as to her coiffure, if her employer could have seen it, he would have wanted to put her in his window. Tricotrin gave her his arm with stupefaction. "Upon my word," he faltered, "you awe me. I am now overwhelmed with embarrassment that I had the temerity to tease you while you dressed. And what shall I say of the host who is churl enough to welcome you in such a shabby coat?"

The cork went pop, their tongues went nineteen to the dozen, and the time went so rapidly that a little clock on the chest of drawers became a positive killjoy.

"By all the laws of dramatic effect," remarked the poet, as they trifled with the almonds and raisins, "you will now divulge that the fashionable lady before me is no 'Rosalie Durand,' of a hairdresser's shop, but madame la comtesse de Thrilling Mystery. Every novel-reader would be aware that at this stage you will demand some dangerous service of me, and that I shall forthwith risk my life and win your love."

"Bien sûr! That is how it ought to be," she agreed.

"Is it impossible?"

"That I can be a countess?"

"Well, we will waive the 'countess'; and for that matter I will not insist on risking my life; but what about the love?"

"Without the rest," she demurred, "the situation would be too commonplace. When I can tell you that I am a countess I will say also that I love you; to-night I am Rosalie Durand, a friend. By the way, now I come to think of it, I shall be all that you have seen in London!"

"Why, I declare, so you will!" exclaimed Tricotrin. "Really, this is a nice thing! I come to England for the benefit of my education—and when it is almost time for me to return, I find that I have spent the whole of the day in a room."

"But you have, at least, had a unique experience in it?" she queried with a whimsical smile.

"Well, yes; my journey has certainly yielded an adventure that none of my acquaintances would credit! Do you laugh at me?"

"Far from it; by-and-by I may even spare a tear for you—if you do not spoil the day by being clumsy at the end."

"Ah, Rosalie," cried the susceptible poet, "how can I bear the parting? What is France without you? I am no longer a Frenchman—my true home is now England! My heart will hunger for it, my thoughts will stretch themselves to it across the sea; banished to Montmartre, I

shall mourn daily for the white cliffs of Albion, for Soho, and for you!"

"I, too, shall remember," she murmured. "But perhaps one of these days you will come to England again?"

"If the fare could be paid with devotion I would come every Sunday, but how can I hope to amass enough money? Such things do not happen twice. No, I will not deceive myself—this is our farewell. See!" He rose, and turned the little clock with its face to the wall. "When that clock strikes, I must go to catch my train—in the meantime we will ignore the march of time. Farewells, tears, regrets, let us forget that they exist—let us drink the last glass together gaily, *mignonne!*"

They pledged each other with brave smiles, hand in hand. And now their chatter became fast and furious, to drown the clock's impatient tick.

The clockwork wheezed and whirred.

"'Tis going to part us," shouted Tricotrin; "laugh, laugh, Beloved, so that we may not hear!"

"Kiss me," she cried; "while the hour sounds, you shall hold me in your arms!"

"Heaven," gasped the young man, as the too brief embrace concluded, "how I wish it had been striking midnight!"

The next moment came the separation. He descended the stairs; at the window she waved her hand to him. And in the darkness of an "English hansom" the poet covered his face and wept.

"From our hearts we rejoice to have thee safely back!" they chorused in Montmartre. "And what didst thou see in London?"

"Oh, mon Dieu, what noble sights!" exclaimed Tricotrin. "The *Lor' Maire* blazes with jewels like the Shah of Persia; and compared with *Peeccadeelly*, the *Champs Elysées* are no wider than a hat-band. *Vive l'Entente!* Positively, my brain whirls with all the splendours of London I have seen!"

Gold

By OLIVER HERFORD

SOME take their gold
In minted mold
And some in harps hereafter,
But give me mine
In tresses fine
And keep the change in laughter!

The Courtship of Allaphair

By JOHN FOX, JR.

John Fox, Jr.

REACHING at the open-air meeting-house was just over and the citizens of Happy Valley were pouring out of the benched enclosure within living walls of rhododendron. Men, women, children, babes in arms, mounted horse or mule or strolled in family groups homeward up or down the dusty road. Youths and maids paired off, dallying behind. Emerged last one rich, dark, buxom girl alone. Twenty yards down the road two young mountaineers were squatted in the shade whittling, and to one she nodded. The other was a stranger—one Jay Dawn—and the stare he gave her was not only bold but impudent.

"Who's goin' home with *that* gal?" she heard him ask.

"Nobody," was the answer; "*that* gal al'ays goes home *alone*." She heard his snort of incredulity.

"Well, I'm goin' with her right now." The other man caught his arm.

"No, you ain't"—and she heard no more.

Athwart the wooded spur she strode like a man. Her full cheeks and lips were red and her black, straight hair showed Indian blood, of which she was not ashamed. On top of the spur a lank youth with yellow hair stood in the path.

"How-dye, Allaphair!" he called uneasily, while she was yet some yards away.

"How-dye!" she said unsmiling, and striding on toward him with level eyes.

"Allaphair," he pleaded quickly, "lemme—"

"Git out o' my way, Jim Spurgill." The boy stepped quickly from the path and she swept past him.

"Allaphair, lemme walk home with ye." The girl neither answered nor turned her head, though she heard his footsteps behind her.

"Allaphair, uh, Allaphair, please lemme

—" He broke off abruptly and sprang behind a tree, for Allaphair's ungentle ways were widely known. The girl had stooped for a stone and was wheeling with it in her hand. Gingerly the boy poked his head out from behind the tree, prepared to dodge.

"You're wuss'n a she-wolf in sucklin' time," he grumbled, and the girl did not seem displeased. Indeed, there was a grim smile on her scarlet lips when she dropped the stone and stalked on. It was almost an hour before she crossed a foot-log and took the level sandy curve about a little bluff, whence she could see the two-roomed log cabin that was home. There were flowers in the little yard and morning-glories covered the small porch, for, boyish as she was, she loved flowers and growing things. A shrill cry of welcome greeted her at the gate, and she swept the baby sister toddling toward her high above her head, fondled her in her arms, and stopped on the threshold. Within was another man, slight and pale and a stranger.

"This is the new school-teacher, Allaphair," said her mother. "He calls hisself Iry Combs."

"How-dye!" said the girl, but the slight man rose and came forward to shake hands. She flashed a frown at her mother a moment later, behind the stranger's back; teachers boarded around and he might be there for a week and perhaps more. The teacher was mountain born and bred, but he had been to the Bluegrass to school, and he had brought back certain little niceties of dress, bearing, and speech that irritated the girl. He ate slowly and little, for he had what he called indigestion, whatever that was. Distinctly he was shy, and his only vague appeal to her was in his eyes, which were big, dark, and lonely.

It was a disgrace for Allaphair to have reached her years of one-and-twenty with-

out marrying, and the disgrace was just then her mother's favourite theme. Feeling rather poorly, the old woman began on it that afternoon. Allaphair had gone out to the woodpile and was picking up an armful of firewood, and the mother had followed her. Said Allaphair:

"I tell you agin an' agin I hain't got no use fer 'em—a-totin' guns an' knives an' a-drinkin' moonshine an' fightin' an' breakin' up meetin's an' lazin' aroun' ginerally. An' when they ain't that way," she added contemptuously, "they're like that un thar. Look at him!" She broke into a loud laugh. Ira Combs had volunteered to milk, and the old cow had just kicked him over in the mud. He rose red with shame and anger—she felt more than she saw the flash of his eyes—and valiantly and silently he went back to his task. Somehow the girl felt a pang of pity for him, for already she saw in his eyes the telltale look that she knew so well in the eyes of men. With his kind it would go hard; and right she was to the detail.

She herself went to St. Hilda to work and learn, but one morning she passed his little schoolhouse just as he was opening for the day. From a gable the flag of her country waved, and she stopped mystified. And then from the green, narrow little valley floated up to her wondering ears a song. Abruptly it broke off and started again; he was teaching the children the song of her own land, which she and they had never heard before. It was almost sunset when she came back and the teacher was starting for home. He was ahead of her—she knew he had seen her coming—but he did not wait for her, nor did he look back while she was following him all the way home. And next Sunday he too went to church, and after meeting he started for home alone and she followed alone. He had never made any effort to speak to her alone, nor did he venture the courting pleasantries of other men. Only in his telltale eyes was his silent story plain, and she knew it better than if he had put it into words. In spite of her certainty, however, she was a little resentful that Sunday morning, for his slender figure climbed doggedly ahead, and suddenly she sat down that he might get entirely out of her sight.

She got down on her hands and knees to drink from the little rain-clear brook that tinkled across the road at the bottom of the hill, and all at once lifted her head like a wild thing. Some one was coming down the hill—coming at a dog-trot. A moment

later her name was called, and it was the voice of a stranger. She knew it was Jay Dawn, for she had heard of him—had heard of his boast that he would keep company with her—and she kept swiftly on. Again and again he called, but she paid no heed. She glared at him fiercely when he caught up with her—and stopped. He stopped. She walked on and he walked on. He caught her by the arm when she stopped again, and she threw off his hold with a force that wheeled him half around, and started off on a run. She stopped when she next heard him close to her and whirled, with a stone in her hand.

"Go 'way!" she panted. "I'll brain ye!" He laughed, but he came no nearer.

"All right," he said, as though giving up the chase, but when she turned the next spur there Jay was waiting for her by the side of the road.

"How-dye," he grinned. Three times he cut across ledge and spur and gave her a grinning how-dye. The third time she was ready for him and she let fly. The first stone whistled past his head with astonishing speed. The second he dodged and the third caught him between the shoulders as he leaped for a tree with an oath and a yell. And there she left him, swearing horribly and frankly at her.

Jay Dawn did not go back to logging that week. Report was that he had gone to "courtin' an' throwin' rocks at woodpeckers." Both statements were true, but Jay was courting at long range. He hung about her house a great deal. Going to mill, looking for her cow, to and fro from the mission, Allaphair never failed to see Jay Dawn. He always spoke and he never got answer. He always grinned, but his eye was threatening. To the school-teacher he soon began to give special notice, for that was what Allaphair seemed to be doing herself. He saw them sitting in the porch together alone, going out to milk or to the woodpile. Passing her gate one flower-scented dusk, he heard the drone of their voices behind the morning-glory vines and heard her laugh quite humanly. He snorted his disgust, but once when he saw the girl walking home with the teacher from school he seethed with rage and bided his time for both. He did spend much time throwing at woodpeckers, ostensibly, but he was not practising for a rock duel with Allaphair. He had picked out the level stretch of sandy road not far from Allaphair's house, which was densely lined with rhododendron and laurel, and was

carefully denuding it of stones. When any one came along he was playing David with the birds; a moment later he was "a-workin' the public road," but not to make the going easier for the none too dainty feet of Allaphair. Indeed, the girl twice saw him at his peculiar diversion, but all suspicion was submerged in scorn.

The following Sunday things happened. On the way from church the girl had come to the level stretch of sand. Beyond the vine-clad bluff and "a whoop and a holler" further on was home. Midway of the stretch Jay Dawn stepped from the bushes and blocked her way, and with him were his grin and his threatening eye.

"I'm goin' to kiss ye," he said. Right, left, and behind she looked for a stone, and he laughed.

"Thar hain't a rock between that poplar back thar and that poplar thar at the bluff; the woodpeckers done got 'em all." There was no use to run—the girl knew she was trapped and her breast began to heave. Slowly he neared her, with one hand outstretched, as though he were going to halter a wild horse, but she did not give ground. When she slapped at his hand he caught her by one wrist, and then with lightning quickness by the other. Quickly she bent her head, caught one of his wrists with her teeth, and bit it to the bone, so that with an open cry of pain he threw her loose. Then she came at him with her fists like a man, and she fought like a man. Blow after blow she rained on him, and one on the chin made him stagger. He could not hit back, so he closed in, and then it was cavewoman and caveman. He expected her to bite again and scratch, but she did neither—nor did she cry for help. She kept on like a man, and after one blow in his stomach which made him sick she grappled like a wrestler, which she was, and but for his own quickness would have thrown him over her left knee. Each was in the straining embrace of the other now and her heaving breast was crushed against his, and for a moment he stood still.

"This suits me exactly," he cackled, and that made her furious and turned her woman again. To keep her now from biting him he thrust his right forearm under her chin and bent her slowly backward. Her right fist beat his muscular back harmlessly—she caught him by the hair, but unmindful he bent her slowly on.

"I'll have ye killed," she said savagely—"I'll have ye killed"; and then suddenly he

felt her collapse, submissive, and his lips caught hers.

"Thar now," he said, letting her loose; "you need a leetle tamin', you do," and he turned and walked slowly away. The girl dropped to the ground, weeping. But there was an exultant look in her eyes before she reached home.

The teacher was sitting in the porch.

"He never would 'a' done it," she muttered, and she hardly spoke to him.

A message from Jay Dawn reached the school-teacher the morning after the "running of a set" at the settlement school. Jay had infuriated Allaphair by his attentions to Polly Stidham from Quicksand. Allaphair had flirted outrageously with Ira Combs the teacher, and in turn Jay got angry, not at her but at the man. So he sent word that he would come down the next Saturday and knock "that mullet-headed, mealy-mouthed, spindle-shanked rat into the middle of next week," and drive him from the hills.

"Whut you goin' to do about it?" asked Allaphair, secretly thrilled. To her surprise the little man seemed neither worried nor frightened.

"Nothing," he said, adding the final *g* with irritating precision; "but I have never backed out of a fight in my life." Allaphair could hardly hold back a hoot of contempt.

"Why, he'll break you to pieces with his hands."

"Perhaps—if he gets hold of me." The girl almost shrieked.

"You hain't going to run?"

"I'm *not* going to run; it's no disgrace to get licked."

"But if he crows over ye afterwards—whut'll you do then?"

The teacher made no answer, nor did he answer Jay's message. He merely went his way, which was neither to avoid nor seek; so Jay sought him. Allaphair saw him the next Friday afternoon, waiting by the roadside—waiting, no doubt, for Ira Combs. Her first impulse was to cross over the spur and warn the teacher, but curiosity as to just what the little man would do got the better of her, and she slipped aside into the bushes and crept noiselessly to a spot whence she could peer out and see and hear all that might happen. Soon she saw the school-teacher coming, as was his wont, leisurely, looking at the ground at his feet and with his hands clasped behind his back. He did not see the threatening figure waiting until Jay rose.

"Stop thar, little Iry," he sneered, and he whipped out his revolver and fired. The girl nearly screamed, but the bullet cut into the dust near Ira's right foot.

"Yuh danced purty well t'other night, an' I want to see ye dance some more by yo'self. Git at it!" He raised his gun again and the school-teacher raised one hand. He had grown very red and as suddenly very pale, but he did not look frightened.

"You can kill me," he drawled quietly, "but I'm not going to dance for you. Suppose you whoop me instead—I heard that was your intention." Jay laughed.

"Air ye goin' to fight me?" he asked incredulously.

"I'd rather be licked than dance."

"All right," said Jay. "I'll lam' ye aroun' a little an' spank ye good an' mebbe make ye dance atterwards." He unbuckled his pistol and tossed it into the grass by the roadside.

"Will you fight fair?" asked Ira, still formal in speech. "No wrestling, biting, or gouging."

"No wrasslin', no bitin', no gougin'," mimicked Jay, beginning to revolve his huge fists around each other in country fashion. The little man waited, his left arm outstretched and bent and his right across and close to his chest, and the watching girl almost groaned. Still his white, calm face, his steady eyes, and his lithe poise fascinated her. She would not let Jay hurt him badly—she would come out and take a hand herself. Jay opened one fist, and with his open hand made a powerful, contemptuous sweep at Ira's head, and the girl expected to see the little teacher fly off into the bushes and the fight over. To her amazement Ira gave no ground at all. His feet never moved, but like a blacksnake's head his own darted back; Jay's great hand fanned the air, and as his own force whirled him half around, Allaphair had to hold back a screech of laughter, for Ira had *slapped him*. Jay looked puzzled, but with fists clinched, he rushed fiercely. Right and left he swung, but the teacher was never there. Presently there was another stinging smack on his cheek and another, as Ira danced about him like the shadow of a magic lantern.

"He's a-tirin' him down," thought Allaphair, but she was wrong; Ira was trying to make him mad, and that did not take much time or trouble. Jay rushed him.

"No wrasslin'," called Ira quietly, at the same time stopping the rush with a left-

hand swing on Jay's chin that made the head wobble.

"I reckon he must be left-handed," thought the wondering Allaphair. There are persons who literally do grind their teeth with rage and it is audible. The girl heard Jay's now.

"He's goin' to kill him," she thought, and she got ready to do her part, for with a terrible, hoarse grunt Jay had rushed. Like a greased rod of steel the boy writhed loose from the big, crooked talons that reached for his throat, and his right fist, knobbed on the end of another bar of steel, came up under Jay's bent head with every ounce of the whole weight behind it in the blow. It caught the big man on the point of the chin. Jay's head snapped up and back violently, his feet left the ground, and his big body thudded the road.

"My God, he's knocked him down! My God, he's knocked him down!" muttered the amazed girl. "You got him down!" she cried. "Jump on him an' stomp him!" He turned one startled look toward her and—it is incredible—the look even at that moment was shy; but he stood still, for Ira had picked up the ethics as well as the skill of the art, of which nothing was known in Happy Valley or elsewhere in the hills. So he stood still, his hands open, and waited. For a while Jay did not move, and his eyes, when they did open, looked dazed. He rose slowly, and as things came back to him his face became suddenly distorted. Nothing alive could humiliate him that way and still live; he meant to kill now.

"Look out!" screamed the girl. Jay rushed for the gun and Ira darted after him; but there was a quicker flash from the bushes, and Jay found his own gun pointed at his own breast and behind it Allaphair's black eyes searing him.

"Huh!" she grunted contemptuously, and the silence was absolute while she broke the pistol, emptied the cartridges into her hand, and threw them far over into the bushes.

"Less go on home, Iry," she said, and a few steps away she turned and tossed the gun at Jay's feet. He stooped, picked it up, and, twirling it in his hand, looked foolishly after them. Presently he grinned, for at bottom Jay was a man. And two hours later, amid much wonder and many guffaws, he was telling the tale:

"The damned leetle spindle-shank licked me—licked *me*! An' I'll back him agin anybody in Happy Valley or anywhere else—if

you leave out bitin', goug'in', and wrasslin'."

"Did ye lose yo' gal, too?" asked Pleasant Trouble.

"Huh!" said Jay, "I reckon *not*—she knows *her* boss."

The two walked home slowly and in silence—Ira in front and Allaphair, as does the woman in the hills, following close behind, in a spirit quite foreign to her hitherto. The little school-teacher had

turned shy again and said never a word, but, as he opened the gate to let her pass through, she saw the old, old, telltale look in his sombre eyes. Her mother was crooning in the porch.

"No ploughin' termorrer, mammy. Me an' Iry want the ole nag to go down to the Couht House in the mornin'. Iry's axed me to marry him."

Perhaps every woman does not love a master—perhaps Allaphair had found hers.



Here and There

"But as for dogs," continued Rickeen . . . "the grandest dog ever was in this country was Mullowny's. Ye couldn't know what kind of breed was in him, but ye'd *have* to like him, he was that spotted." SOMERVILLE AND ROSS.

FOUND. A Maltese soprano kat, about 12 months old, singing old hundred on a picket fence, late last thursda nite, whichever person owns sed kat will find him (or her, according to circumstansis) in a vakant lot, just bak ov our hous, still butiful in death. JOSH BILLINGS.

Henry was in a savage humour on the subject of Boston. He saw Boutwells at every counter. He found a personal grief in every tree. Fifteen or twenty years afterwards, Clarence King used to amuse him by mourning over the narrow escape that nature had made in attaining perfection. Except for two mistakes, the earth would have been a success. One of these errors was the inclination of the ecliptic; the other was the differentiation of the sexes, and the saddest thought about the last was that it should have been so modern.

Adams, in his splenetic temper, held that both these unnecessary evils had wreaked their worst on Boston. The climate made eternal war on society, and sex was a species of crime. The ecliptic had inclined itself beyond recovery till life was as thin as the elm trees.

Of course he was in the wrong. The thinness was in himself, not in Boston.

HENRY ADAMS.

All the girls and women I have met and loved have taught me something; they have been to me the charm and the wonder, the mystery and the romance of life. I have been from the Cape to Cairo, and from Vladikavkas to Vladivostok; but one girl has taught me more than I could find in two continents. FRANK HARRIS.

"I adore women, but they simply terrify me. They are indispensable to me. I think about them continually, I dress carefully in order to be pleasing to them, I memorize anecdotes that I think might amuse them; but when I am face to face with any one woman I am conscious of only one thing—the weak elasticity of my mouth." CONRAD AIKEN.

I must say a few words about four animals that I have never seen in France. . . . Another is a low animal about the size of a little dog or cat. I mention it here, not on account of its excellence but to make of it a symbol of sin. . . . It has black fur, quite beautiful and shining; and has upon its back two perfectly white stripes, which join near the neck and tail, making an oval which adds greatly to their grace. . . . But it is so stinking and casts so foul an odour that . . . I would not have believed it if I had not smelled it myself. Your heart almost fails you when you approach the animal. . . . I believe the sin smelled by Sainte Catherine de Sienne must have had the same vile odour.

FATHER PAUL LE JEUNE (*Jesuit Relations*, 1634).

The Reluctant Dragon

By KENNETH GRAHAME



FOOTPRINTS in the snow have been unfailing provokers of sentiment ever since snow was first a white wonder in this drab-coloured world of ours. In a poetry-book presented to one of us by an aunt, there was a poem by one Wordsworth in which they stood out strongly—with a picture all to themselves, too—but we didn't think very highly either of the poem or the sentiment. Footprints in the sand, now, were quite another matter, and we grasped Crusoe's attitude of mind much more easily than Wordsworth's. Excitement and mystery, curiosity and suspense—these were the only sentiments that tracks, whether in sand or in snow, were able to arouse in us.

We had awakened early that winter morning, puzzled at first by the added light that filled the room. Then, when the truth at last fully dawned on us and we knew that snow-balling was no longer a wistful dream, but a solid certainty waiting for us outside, it was a mere brute fight for the necessary clothes, and the lacing of boots seemed a clumsy invention, and the buttoning of coats an unduly tedious form of fastening, with all that snow going to waste at our very door.

When dinner-time came we had to be dragged in by the scruff of our necks. The short armistice over, the combat was resumed; but presently Charlotte and I, a little weary of contests and of missiles that ran shudderingly down inside one's clothes, forsook the trampled battle-field of the lawn and went exploring the blank virgin spaces of the white world that lay beyond. It stretched away unbroken on every side of us, this mysterious soft garment under which our familiar world had so suddenly hidden itself. Faint imprints showed where a casual bird had alighted, but of other traffic there was next to no sign; which made these strange tracks all the more puzzling.

We came across them first at the corner

of the shrubbery, and pored over them long, our hands on our knees. Experienced trappers that we knew ourselves to be, it was annoying to be brought up suddenly by a beast we could not at once identify.

"Don't you know?" said Charlotte, rather scornfully. "Thought you knew all the beasts that ever was."

This put me on my mettle, and I hastily rattled off a string of animal names embracing both the arctic and the tropic zones, but without much real confidence.

"No," said Charlotte, on consideration; "they won't any of 'em quite do. Seems like something *lisardy*. Did you say a *iguanodon*? Might be that, p'raps. But that's not British, and we want a real British beast. I think it's a dragon!"

"Tisn't half big enough," I objected.

"Well, all dragons must be small to begin with," said Charlotte: "like everything else. P'raps this is a little dragon who's got lost. A little dragon would be rather nice to have. He might scratch and spit, but he couldn't *do* anything really. Let's track him down!"

So we set off into the wide snow-clad world, hand in hand, our hearts big with expectation,—complacently confident that by a few smudgy traces in the snow we were in a fair way to capture a half-grown specimen of a fabulous beast.

We ran the monster across the paddock and along the hedge of the next field, and then he took to the road like any tame civilized taxpayer. Here his tracks became blended with and lost among more ordinary footprints, but imagination and a fixed idea will do a great deal, and we were sure we knew the direction a dragon would naturally take. The traces, too, kept re-appearing at intervals—at least Charlotte maintained they did, and as it was *her* dragon I left the following of the slot to her and trotted along peacefully, feeling that it was an expedition anyhow and something was sure to come out of it.

Charlotte took me across another field or two, and through a copse, and into a fresh road; and I began to feel sure it was only her confounded pride that made her go on pretending to see dragon-tracks instead of owning she was entirely at fault, like a reasonable person. At last she dragged me excitedly through a gap in a hedge of an obviously private character; the waste, open world of field and hedge-row disappeared, and we found ourselves in a garden, well-kept, secluded, most undragon-haunted in appearance. Once inside, I knew where we were. This was the garden of my friend the circus-man, though I had never approached it before by a lawless gap, from this unfamiliar side. And here was the circus-man himself, placidly smoking a pipe as he strolled up and down the walks. I stepped up to him and asked him politely if he had lately seen a Beast.

"May I inquire," he said, with all civility, "what particular sort of a Beast you may happen to be looking for?"

"It's a *lizardy* sort of Beast," I explained. "Charlotte says it's a dragon, but she doesn't really know much about beasts."

The circus-man looked round about him slowly. "I don't *think*," he said, "that I've seen a dragon in these parts recently. But if I come across one I'll know it belongs to you, and I'll have him taken round to you at once."

"Thank you very much," said Charlotte, "but don't *trouble* about it, please, 'cos p'raps it isn't a dragon after all. Only I thought I saw his little footprints in the snow, and we followed 'em up, and they seemed to lead right in here, but maybe it's all a mistake, and thank you all the same."

"Oh, no trouble at all," said the circus-man, cheerfully. "I should be only too pleased. But of course, as you say, it *may* be a mistake. And it's getting dark, and he seems to have got away for the present, whatever he is. You'd better come in and have some tea. I'm quite alone, and we'll make a roaring fire, and I've got the biggest Book of Beasts you ever saw. It's got every beast in the world, and all of 'em coloured; and we'll try and find *your* beast in it!"

We were always ready for tea at any time, and especially when combined with beasts. There was marmalade, too, and apricot-jam, brought in expressly for us; and afterwards the beast-book was spread out, and, as the man had truly said, it

contained every sort of beast that had ever been in the world.

The striking of six o'clock set the more prudent Charlotte nudging me, and we recalled ourselves with an effort from Beast-land, and reluctantly stood up to go.

"Here, I'm coming along with you," said the circus-man. "I want another pipe, and a walk'll do me good. You needn't talk to me unless you like."

Our spirits rose to their wonted level again. The way had seemed so long, the outside world so dark and eerie, after the bright warm room and the highly coloured beast-book. But a walk with a real Man—why, that was a treat in itself! We set off briskly, the Man in the middle. I looked up at him and wondered whether I should ever live to smoke a big pipe with that careless sort of majesty! But Charlotte, whose young mind was not set on tobacco as a possible goal, made herself heard from the other side.

"Now, then," she said, "tell us a story, please, won't you?"

The Man sighed heavily and looked about him. "I knew it," he groaned. "I *knew* I should have to tell a story. Oh, why did I leave my pleasant fireside? Well, I *will* tell you a story. Only let me think a minute."

So he thought a minute, and then he told us this story.

Long ago—might have been hundreds of years ago—in a cottage half-way between this village and yonder shoulder of the Downs up there, a shepherd lived with his wife and their little son. Now the shepherd spent his days—and at certain times of the year his nights too—up on the wide ocean-bosom of the Downs, with only the sun and the stars and the sheep for company, and the friendly chattering world of men and women far out of sight and hearing. But his little son, when he wasn't helping his father, and often when he was as well, spent much of his time buried in big volumes that he borrowed from the affable gentry and interested parsons of the country round about. And his parents were very fond of him, and rather proud of him too, though they didn't let on in his hearing, so he was left to go his own way and read as much as he liked; and instead of frequently getting a cuff on the side of the head, as might very well have happened to him, he was treated more or less as an equal by his parents, who sensibly thought it a very fair division of labour that they

should supply the practical knowledge, and he the book-learning. They knew that book-learning often came in useful at a pinch, in spite of what their neighbours said. What the Boy chiefly dabbled in was natural history and fairy-tales, and he just took them as they came, in a sand-wichy sort of way, without making any distinctions; and really his course of reading strikes one as rather sensible.

One evening the shepherd, who for some nights past had been disturbed and pre-occupied, and off his usual mental balance, came home all of a tremble, and, sitting down at the table where his wife and son were peacefully employed, she with her seam, he in following out the adventures of the Giant with no Heart in his Body, exclaimed with much agitation:

"It's all up with me, Marial! Never no more can I go up on them there Downs, was it ever so!"

"Now don't you take on like that," said his wife, who was a very sensible woman: "but tell us all about it first, whatever it is as has given you this shake-up, and then me and you and the son here, between us, we ought to be able to get to the bottom of it!"

"It began some nights ago," said the shepherd. "You know that cave up there—I never liked it, somehow, and the sheep never liked it neither, and when sheep don't like a thing there's generally some reason for it. Well, for some time past there's been faint noises coming from that cave—noises like heavy sighings, with grunts mixed up in them; and sometimes a snoring, far away down—*real* snoring, yet somehow not *honest* snoring, like you and me o'nights, you know!"

"I know," remarked the Boy, quietly. "Of course I was terrible frightened," the shepherd went on; "yet somehow I couldn't keep away. So this very evening, before I come down, I took a cast round by the cave, quietly. And there—O Lord! there I saw him at last, as plain as I see you!"

"Saw *who*?" said his wife, beginning to share in her husband's nervous terror.

"Why *him*, I'm a-telling you!" said the shepherd. "He was sticking half-way out of the cave, and seemed to be enjoying of the cool of the evening in a poetical sort of way. He was as big as four cart-horses, and all covered with shiny scales—deep-blue scales at the top of him, shading off to a tender sort o' green below. As he breathed, there was that sort of flicker

over his nostrils that you see over our chalk roads on a baking windless day in summer. He had his chin on his paws, and I should say he was meditating about things. Oh, yes, a peaceable sort o' beast enough, and not ramping or carrying on or doing anything but what was quite right and proper. I admit all that. And yet, what am I to do? *Scales*, you know, and claws, and a tail for certain, though I didn't see that end of him—I ain't *used* to 'em, and I don't *hold* with 'em, and that's a fact!"

The Boy, who had apparently been absorbed in his book during his father's recital, now closed the volume, yawned, clasped his hands behind his head, and said sleepily:

"It's all right, father. Don't you worry. It's only a dragon."

"Only a dragon?" cried his father. "What do you mean, sitting there, you and your dragons? *Only* a dragon indeed! And what do *you* know about it?"

"'Cos it is, and 'cos I *do* know," replied the Boy quietly. "Look here, father, you know we've each of us got our line. *You* know about sheep, and weather, and things; I know about dragons. I always said, you know, that that cave up there was a dragon-cave. I always said it must have belonged to a dragon some time, and ought to belong to a dragon now, if rules count for anything. Well, now you tell me it *has* got a dragon, and so *that's* all right. I'm not half as much surprized as when you told me it *hadn't* got a dragon. Rules always come right if you wait quietly. Now, please, just leave this all to me. And I'll stroll up to-morrow morning—no, in the morning I can't, I've got a whole heap of things to do—well, perhaps in the evening, if I'm quite free, I'll go up and have a talk to him, and you'll find it'll be all right. Only, please, don't you go worrying round there without me. You don't understand 'em a bit, and they're very sensitive, you know!"

"He's quite right, father," said the sensible mother. "As he says, dragons is his line and not ours. He's wonderful knowing about book-beasts, as every one allows. And to tell the truth, I'm not half happy in my own mind, thinking of that poor animal lying alone up there, without a bit o' hot supper or anyone to change the news with; and maybe we'll be able to do something for him; and if he ain't quite respectable our Boy'll find it out quick enough. He's got a pleasant sort o' way

with him that makes everybody tell him everything."

Next day, after he'd had his tea, the Boy strolled up the chalky track that led to the summit of the Downs; and there, sure enough, he found the dragon, stretched lazily on the sward in front of his cave. The view from that point was a magnificent one. To the right and left, the bare and billowy leagues of Downs; in front, the vale, with its clustered homesteads, its threads of white roads running through orchards and well-tilled acreage, and, far away, a hint of gray old cities on the horizon. A cool breeze played over the surface of the grass and the silver shoulder of a large moon was showing above distant junipers. No wonder the dragon seemed in a peaceful and contented mood; indeed, as the Boy approached he could hear the beast purring with a happy regularity. "Well, we live and learn!" he said to himself. "None of my books ever told me that dragons purred!"

"Hullo, dragon!" said the Boy, quietly, when he had got up to him.

The dragon, on hearing the approaching footsteps, made the beginning of a courteous effort to rise. But when he saw it was a Boy, he set his eyebrows severely.

"Now don't you hit me," he said; "or bung stones, or squirt water, or anything. I won't have it, I tell you!"

"Not goin' to hit you," said the Boy wearily, dropping on the grass beside the beast: "and don't, for goodness' sake, keep on saying 'Don't'; I hear so much of it, and it's monotonous, and makes me tired. I've simply looked in to ask you how you were and all that sort of thing; but if I'm in the way I can easily clear out. I've lots of friends, and no one can say I'm in the habit of shoving myself in where I'm not wanted!"

"No, no, don't go off in a huff," said the dragon, hastily; "fact is,—I'm as happy up here as the day's long; never without an occupation, dear fellow, never without an occupation! And, yet, between ourselves, it is a trifle dull at times."

The Boy bit off a stalk of grass and chewed it. "Going to make a long stay here?" he asked, politely.

"Can't hardly say at present," replied the dragon. "It seems a nice place enough—but I've only been here a short time, and one must look about and reflect and consider before settling down. It's rather a serious thing, settling down. Besides—

now I'm going to tell you something! You'd never guess it if you tried ever so!—fact is, I'm such a confoundedly lazy beggar!"

"You surprise me," said the Boy, civilly.

"It's the sad truth," the dragon went on, settling down between his paws and evidently delighted to have found a listener at last: "and I fancy that's really how I came to be here. You see, all the other fellows were so active and earnest and all that sort of thing—always rampaging, and skirmishing, and scouring the desert sands, and pacing the margin of the sea, and chasing knights all over the place, and devouring damsels, and going on generally—whereas I liked to get my meals regular and then to prop my back against a bit of rock and snooze a bit, and wake up and think of things going on and how they kept going on just the same, you know! So when it happened I got fairly caught."

"When *what* happened, please?" asked the Boy.

"That's just what I don't precisely know," said the dragon. "I suppose the earth sneezed, or shook itself, or the bottom dropped out of something. Anyhow there was a shake and a roar and a general stramash, and I found myself miles away underground and wedged in as tight as tight. Well, thank goodness, my wants are few, and at any rate I had peace and quietness and wasn't always being asked to come along and *do* something. And I've got such an active mind—always occupied, I assure you! But time went on, and there was a certain sameness about the life, and at last I began to think it would be fun to work my way upstairs and see what you other fellows were doing. So I scratched and burrowed, and worked this way and that way and at last I came out through this cave here. And I like the country, and the view, and the people—what I've seen of 'em—and on the whole I feel inclined to settle down here."

"What's your mind always occupied about?" asked the Boy. "That's what I want to know."

The dragon coloured slightly and looked away. Presently he said bashfully:

"Did you ever—just for fun—try to make up poetry—verses, you know?"

"Course I have," said the Boy. "Heaps of it. And some of it's quite good, I feel sure, only there's no one here cares about it. Mother's very kind and all that, when I read it to her, and so's father for that matter. But somehow they don't seem to—"

"Exactly," cried the dragon; "my own case exactly. They don't seem to, and you can't argue with 'em about it. Now you've got culture, you have, I could tell it on you at once, and I should just like your candid opinion about some little things I threw off lightly, when I was down there. I'm awfully pleased to have met you, and I'm hoping the other neighbours will be equally agreeable. There was a very nice old gentleman up here only last night, but he didn't seem to want to intrude."

"That was my father," said the Boy, "and he is a nice old gentleman, and I'll introduce you some day, if you like."

"Can't you two come up here and dine or something to-morrow?" asked the dragon eagerly. "Only, of course, if you've got nothing better to do," he added politely.

"Thanks, awfully," said the Boy, "but we don't go out anywhere without my mother, and, to tell you the truth, I'm afraid she mightn't quite approve of you. You see there's no getting over the hard fact that you're a dragon, is there? And when you talk of settling down, and the neighbours, and so on, I can't help feeling that you don't quite realize your position. You're an enemy of the human race, you see!"

"Haven't got an enemy in the world," said the dragon, cheerfully. "Too lazy to make 'em, to begin with. And if I do read other fellows my poetry, I'm always ready to listen to theirs!"

"Oh, dear!" cried the Boy, "I wish you'd try and grasp the situation properly. When the other people find you out they'll come after you with spears and swords and all sorts of things. You'll have to be exterminated, according to their way of looking at it! You're a scourge, and a pest, and a baneful monster!"

"Not a word of truth in it," said the dragon, wagging his head solemnly. "Character'll bear the strictest investigation. And now, there's a little sonnet-thing I was working on when you appeared on the scene——"

"Oh, if you *won't* be sensible," cried the Boy, getting up, "I'm going off home. No, I can't stop for sonnets; my mother's sitting up. I'll look you up to-morrow, sometime or other, and do for goodness' sake try and realize that you're a pestilential scourge, or you'll find yourself in a most awful fix. Good-night!"

The Boy found it an easy matter to set the mind of his parents' at ease about his

new friend. They had always left that branch to him, and they took his word without a murmur. The shepherd was formally introduced and many compliments and kind inquiries were exchanged. His wife, however, though expressing her willingness to do anything she could—to mend things, or set the cave to rights, or cook a little something when the dragon had been poring over sonnets and forgotten his meals as male things *will* do, could not be brought to recognize him formally. The fact that he was a dragon and "they didn't know who he was" seemed to count for everything with her. She made no objection, however, to her little son spending his evenings with the dragon quietly, so long as he was home by nine o'clock: and many a pleasant night they had, sitting on the sward, while the dragon told stories of old, old times, when dragons were quite plentiful and the world was a livelier place than it is now, and life was full of thrills and jumps and surprises.

What the Boy had feared, however, soon came to pass. The most modest and retiring dragon in the world, if he's as big as four cart-horses and covered with blue scales, cannot keep altogether out of the public view. And so in the village tavern of nights the fact that a real live dragon sat brooding in the cave on the Downs was naturally a subject for talk. Though the villagers were extremely frightened, they were rather proud as well. It was a distinction to have a dragon of your own, and it was felt to be a feather in the cap of the village. Still, all were agreed that this sort of thing couldn't be allowed to go on. The dreadful beast must be exterminated, the countryside must be freed from this pest, this terror, this destroying scourge. The fact that not even a hen-roost was the worse for the dragon's arrival wasn't allowed to have anything to do with it. He was a dragon, and he couldn't deny it, and if he didn't choose to behave as such that was his own lookout. But in spite of much valiant talk no hero was found willing to take sword and spear and free the suffering village and win deathless fame; and each night's heated discussion always ended in nothing. Meanwhile the dragon, a happy Bohemian, lolled on the turf, enjoyed the sunsets, told antediluvian anecdotes to the Boy, and polished his old verses while meditating on fresh ones.

One day the Boy, on walking in to the village, found everything wearing a festal appearance which was not to be accounted

for in the calendar. Carpets and gay-coloured stuffs were hung out of the windows, the church-bells clamoured noisily, the little street was flower-strewn, and the whole population jostled each other along either side of it, chattering, shoving, and ordering each other to stand back. The Boy saw a friend of his own age in the crowd and hailed him.

"What's up?" he cried. "Is it the players, or bears, or a circus, or what?"

"It's all right," his friend hailed back. "He's a-coming."

"Who's a-coming?" demanded the Boy, thrusting into the throng.

"Why, St. George, of course," replied his friend. "He's heard tell of our dragon, and he's comin' on purpose to slay the deadly beast, and free us from his horrid yoke. Oh, my! won't there be a jolly fight!"

Here was news indeed! The Boy felt that he ought to make quite sure for himself, and he wriggled himself in between the legs of his good-natured elders, abusing them all the time for their unmannerly habit of shoving. Once in the front rank, he breathlessly awaited the arrival.

Presently from the far-away end of the line came the sound of cheering. Next, the measured tramp of a great war-horse made his heart beat quicker, and then he found himself cheering with the rest, as, amidst welcoming shouts, shrill cries of women, uplifting of babies and waving of handkerchiefs, St. George paced slowly up the street. The Boy's heart stood still and he breathed with sobs, the beauty and the grace of the hero were so far beyond anything he had yet seen. His fluted armour was inlaid with gold, his plumed helmet hung at his saddle-bow, and his thick fair hair framed a face gracious and gentle beyond expression till you caught the sternness in his eyes. He drew rein in front of the little inn, and the villagers crowded round with greetings and thanks and voluble statements of their wrongs and grievances and oppressions. The Boy heard the grave, gentle voice of the Saint, assuring them that all would be well now, and that he would stand by them and see them righted and free them from their foe; then he dismounted and passed through the doorway and the crowd poured in after him. But the Boy made off up the hill as fast as he could lay his legs to the ground.

"It's all up, dragon!" he shouted as soon as he was within sight of the beast. "He's coming! He's here now! You'll

have to pull yourself together and *do* something at last!"

The dragon was licking his scales and rubbing them with a bit of house-flannel the Boy's mother had lent him, till he shone like a great turquoise.

"Don't be *violent*, Boy," he said without looking round. "Sit down and get your breath, and try and remember that the noun governs the verb, and then perhaps you'll be good enough to tell me *who's* coming?"

"That's right, take it coolly," said the Boy. "Hope you'll be half as cool when I've got through with my news. It's only St. George who's coming, that's all; he rode into the village half-an-hour ago. Of course you can lick him—a great big fellow like you! But I thought I'd warn you, 'cos he's sure to be round early, and he's got the longest, wickedest-looking spear you ever did see!" And the Boy got up and began to jump round in sheer delight at the prospect of the battle.

"Oh, deary, deary me," moaned the dragon; "this is too awful. I won't see him, and that's flat. I don't want to know the fellow at all. I'm sure he's not nice. You must tell him to go away at once, please. Say he can write if he likes, but I can't give him an interview. I'm not seeing anybody at present."

"Now dragon, dragon," said the Boy imploringly, "don't be perverse and wrong-headed. You've got to fight him some time or other, you know, 'cos he's St. George and you're the dragon. Better get it over, and then we can go on with the sonnets. And you ought to consider other people a little, too. If it's been dull up here for you, think how dull it's been for me!"

"My dear little man," said the dragon solemnly, "just understand, once for all, that I can't fight and I won't fight. I've never fought in my life, and I'm not going to begin now, just to give you a Roman holiday. In old days I always let the other fellows—the *earnest* fellows—do all the fighting, and no doubt that's why I have the pleasure of being here now."

"But if you don't fight he'll cut your head off!" gasped the Boy, miserable at the prospect of losing both his fight and his friend.

"Oh, I think not," said the dragon in his lazy way. "You'll be able to arrange something. I've every confidence in you, you're such a *manager*. Just run down, there's a dear chap, and make it all right. I leave it entirely to you."

The Boy made his way back to the village in a state of great despondency. First of all, there wasn't going to be any fight; next, his dear and honoured friend the dragon hadn't shown up in quite such a heroic light as he would have liked; and lastly, whether the dragon was a hero at heart or not, it made no difference, for St. George would most undoubtedly cut his head off. "Arrange things indeed!" he said bitterly to himself. "The dragon treats the whole affair as if it was an invitation to tea and croquet."

The villagers were straggling homewards as he passed up the street, all of them in the highest spirits, and gleefully discussing the splendid fight that was in store. The Boy pursued his way to the inn, and passed into the principal chamber, where St. George now sat alone, musing over the chances of the fight, and the sad stories of rapine and of wrong that had so lately been poured into his sympathetic ears.

"May I come in, St. George?" said the Boy politely, as he paused at the door. "I want to talk to you about this little matter of the dragon, if you're not tired of it by this time."

"Yes, come in, Boy," said the Saint kindly. "Another tale of misery and wrong, I fear me. Is it a kind parent, then, of whom the tyrant has bereft you? Or some tender sister or brother? Well, it shall soon be avenged."

"Nothing of the sort," said the Boy. "There's a misunderstanding somewhere, and I want to put it right. The fact is, this is a *good* dragon."

"Exactly," said St. George, smiling pleasantly, "I quite understand. A *good* dragon. Believe me, I do not in the least regret that he is an adversary worthy of my steel, and no feeble specimen of his noxious tribe."

"But he's *not* a noxious tribe," cried the Boy distressedly. "Oh dear, oh dear, how *stupid* men are when they get an idea into their heads! I tell you he's a *good* dragon, and a friend of mine, and tells me the most beautiful stories you ever heard, all about old times and when he was little. And he's been so kind to mother, and mother'd do anything for him. And father likes him too, though father doesn't hold with art and poetry much, and always falls asleep when the dragon starts talking about *style*. But the fact is, nobody can help liking him when once they know him. He's so engaging and so trustful, and as simple as a child!"

"Sit down, and draw your chair up," said St. George. "I like a fellow who sticks up for his friends, and I'm sure the dragon has his good points, if he's got a friend like you. But that's not the question. All this evening I've been listening, with grief and anguish unspeakable, to tales of murder, theft, and wrong; rather too highly coloured, perhaps, not always quite convincing, but forming in the main a most serious roll of crime. History teaches us that the greatest rascals often possess all the domestic virtues; and I fear that your cultivated friend, in spite of the qualities which have won (and rightly) your regard, has got to be speedily exterminated."

"Oh, you've been taking in all the yarns those fellows have been telling you," said the Boy impatiently. "Why, our villagers are the biggest story-tellers in all the country round. It's a known fact. You're a stranger in these parts, or else you'd have heard it already. All they want is a *fight*. They're the most awful beggars for getting up fights—it's meat and drink to them. Dogs, bulls, dragons—anything so long as it's a fight. Why, they've got a poor innocent badger in the stable behind here, at this moment. They were going to have some fun with him to-day, but they're saving him up now till *your* little affair's over. And I've no doubt they've been telling you what a hero you were, and how you were bound to win, in the cause of right and justice, and so on; but let me tell you, I came down the street just now, and they were betting six to four on the dragon freely!"

"Six to four on the dragon!" murmured St. George sadly, resting his cheek on his hand. "This is an evil world, and sometimes I begin to think that all the wickedness in it is not entirely bottled up inside the dragons. And yet—may not this wily beast have misled you as to his real character, in order that your good report of him may serve as a cloak for his evil deeds? Nay, may there not be, at this very moment, some hapless Princess immured within yonder gloomy cavern?"

The moment he had spoken, St. George was sorry for what he had said, the Boy looked so genuinely distressed.

"I assure you, St. George," he said earnestly, "there's nothing of the sort in the cave at all. The dragon's a real gentleman, every inch of him, and I may say that no one would be more shocked and grieved than he would, at hearing you

talk in that—that *loose* way about matters on which he has very strong views!"

"Well, perhaps I've been over-credulous," said St. George. "Perhaps I've misjudged the animal. But what are we to do? Here are the dragon and I, almost face to face, each supposed to be thirsting for each other's blood. I don't see any way out of it, exactly. What do you suggest? Can't you arrange things, somehow?"

"That's just what the dragon said," replied the Boy, rather nettled. "Really, the way you two seem to leave everything to me—I suppose you couldn't be persuaded to go away quietly, could you?"

"Impossible, I fear," said the Saint. "Quite against the rules. You know that as well as I do."

"Well, then, look here," said the Boy, "it's early yet—would you mind strolling up with me and seeing the dragon and talking it over? It's not far, and any friend of mine will be most welcome."

"Well, it's *irregular*," said St. George, rising, "but really it seems about the most sensible thing to do. You're taking a lot of trouble on your friend's account," he added, good-naturedly, as they passed out through the door together. "But cheer up! Perhaps there won't have to be any fight after all."

"Oh, but I hope there will, though!" replied the little fellow, wistfully.

"I've brought a friend to see you, dragon," said the Boy, rather loud.

The dragon woke up with a start. "I was just—er—thinking about things," he said in his simple way. "Very pleased to make your acquaintance, sir. Charming weather we're having!"

"This is St. George," said the Boy, shortly. "St. George, let me introduce you to the dragon. We've come up to talk things over quietly, dragon, and now for goodness' sake do let us have a little straight common sense, and come to some practical businesslike arrangement, for I'm sick of views and theories of life and personal tendencies, and all that sort of thing. I may perhaps add that my mother's sitting up."

"So glad to meet you, St. George," began the dragon rather nervously, "because you've been a great traveler, I hear, and I've always been rather a stay-at-home. But I can show you many antiquities, many interesting features of our countryside, if you're stopping here any time——"

"I think," said St. George, in his frank, pleasant way, "that we'd really better take the advice of our young friend here, and try to come to some understanding, on a business footing, about this little affair of ours. Now don't you think that after all the simplest plan would be just to fight it out, according to the rules, and let the best man win? They're betting on you, I may tell you, down in the village, but I don't mind that!"

"Oh, yes, *do* dragon," said the Boy, delightedly; "it'll save such a lot of bother!"

"My young friend, you shut up," said the dragon severely. "Believe me, St. George," he went on, "there's nobody in the world I'd sooner oblige than you and this young gentleman here. But the whole thing's nonsense, and conventionality, and popular thick-headedness. There's absolutely nothing to fight about, from beginning to end. And anyhow I'm not going to, so that settles it!"

"But supposing I make you?" said St. George, rather nettled.

"You can't," said the dragon, triumphantly. "I should only go into my cave and retire for a time down the hole I come up. You'd soon get heartily sick of sitting outside and waiting for me to come out and fight you. And as soon as you'd really gone away, why, I'd come up again gaily, for I tell you frankly, I like this place, and I'm going to stay here!"

St. George gazed for a while on the fair landscape around them. "But this would be a beautiful place for a fight," he began again persuasively. "These great bare rolling Downs for the arena—and me in my golden armour showing up against your big blue scaly coils! Think what a picture it would make!"

"Now you're trying to get at me through my artistic sensibilities," said the dragon. "But it won't work. Not but what it would make a very pretty picture, as you say," he added, wavering a little.

"We seem to be getting rather nearer to business," put in the Boy. "You must see, dragon, that there's got to be a fight of some sort, 'cos you can't want to have to go down that dirty old hole again and stop there till goodness knows when."

"It might be arranged," said St. George, thoughtfully. "I *must* spare you somewhere, of course, but I'm not bound to hurt you very much. There's such a lot of you that there must be a few *spare* places somewhere. Here, for instance, just behind

your foreleg. It couldn't hurt you much, just here!"

"Now you're tickling, George," said the dragon, coyly. "No, that place won't do at all. Even if it didn't hurt—and I'm sure it would, awfully—it would make me laugh, and that would spoil everything."

"Let's try somewhere else, then," said St. George, patiently. "Under your neck, for instance—all these folds of thick skin—if I speared you here you'd never even known I'd done it!"

"Yes, but are you sure you can hit off the right place?" asked the dragon, anxiously.

"Of course I am," said St. George, with confidence. "You leave that to me!"

"It's just because I've got to leave it to you that I'm asking," replied the dragon, rather testily. "No doubt you would deeply regret any error you might make in the hurry of the moment; but you wouldn't regret it half as much as I should! However, I suppose we've got to trust somebody, as we go through life, and your plan seems, on the whole, as good a one as any."

"Look here, dragon," interrupted the Boy, a little jealous on behalf of his friend, who seemed to be getting all the worst of the bargain: "I don't quite see where *you* come in! There's to be a fight, apparently, and you're to be licked; and what I want to know is, what are *you* going to get out of it?"

"St. George," said the dragon, "just tell him, please—what will happen after I'm vanquished in the deadly combat?"

"Well, according to the rules I suppose I shall lead you in triumph down to the market-place or whatever answers to it," said St. George.

"Precisely," said the dragon. "And then——"

"And then there'll be shoutings and speeches and things," continued St. George. "And I shall explain that you're converted, and see the error of your ways, and so on."

"Quite so," said the dragon. "And then——?"

"Oh, and then——" said St. George, "why, and then there will be the usual banquet, I suppose."

"Exactly," said the dragon; "and that's where I come in. Look here," he continued, addressing the Boy, "I'm bored to death up here, and no one really appreciates me. I'm going into Society, I am, through the kindly aid of our friend here, who's taking such a lot of trouble on my account; and you'll find I've got all the qualities to endear me to people who en-

ertain! So now that's all settled, and if you don't mind—I'm an old-fashioned fellow—don't want to turn you out, but——"

"Remember, you'll have to do your proper share of the fighting, dragon!" said St. George, as he took the hint and rose to go; "I mean ramping, and breathing fire, and so on!"

"I can *ramp* all right," replied the dragon, confidently; "as to breathing fire, it's surprizing how easily one gets out of practice; but I'll do the best I can. Good-night!"

They had descended the hill and were almost back in the village again, when St. George stopped short. "*Knew* I had forgotten something," he said. "There ought to be a Princess. Terror-stricken and chained to a rock, and all that sort of thing. Boy, can't you arrange a Princess?"

The Boy was in the middle of a tremendous yawn. "I'm tired to death," he wailed, "and I *can't* arrange a Princess, or anything more, at this time of night. And my mother's sitting up, and *do* stop asking me to arrange more things till to-morrow!"

Next morning the people began streaming up to the Downs at quite an early hour, in their Sunday clothes and carrying baskets with bottle-necks sticking out of them, every one intent on securing good places for the combat. This was not exactly a simple matter, for of course it was quite possible that the dragon might win, and in that case even those who had put their money on him felt they could hardly expect him to deal with his backers on a different footing to the rest. Places were chosen, therefore, with circumspection and with a view to a speedy retreat in case of emergency; and the front rank was mostly composed of boys who had escaped from parental control and now sprawled and rolled about on the grass, regardless of the shrill threats and warnings discharged at them by their anxious mothers behind.

The Boy had secured a good front place, well up towards the cave, and was feeling as anxious as a stage-manager on a first night. Could the dragon be depended upon? He might change his mind and vote the whole performance rot; or else, seeing that the affair had been so hastily planned, without even a rehearsal, he might be too nervous to show up. The Boy looked narrowly at the cave, but it showed no sign of life or occupation. Could the dragon have made a moonlight flitting?

The higher portions of the ground were

now black with sightseers, and presently a sound of cheering and a waving of handkerchiefs told that something was visible to them which the Boy, far up towards the dragon-end of the line as he was, could not yet see. A minute more and St. George's red plumes topped the hill, as the Saint rode slowly forth on the great level space which stretched up to the grim mouth of the cave. Very gallant and beautiful he looked, on his tall war-horse, his golden armour glancing in the sun, his great spear held erect, the little white pennon, crimson-crossed, fluttering at its point. He drew rein and remained motionless. The lines of spectators began to give back a little, nervously; and even the boys in front stopped pulling hair and cuffing each other, and leaned forward expectant.

"Now then, dragon!" muttered the Boy impatiently, fidgeting where he sat. He need not have distressed himself, had he only known. The dramatic possibilities of the thing had tickled the dragon immensely, and he had been up from an early hour, preparing for his first public appearance with as much heartiness as if the years had run backwards, and he had been again a little dragonlet, playing with his sisters on the floor of their mother's cave, at the game of saints-and-dragons, in which the dragon was bound to win.

A low muttering, mingled with snorts, now made itself heard; rising to a bellowing roar that seemed to fill the plain. Then a cloud of smoke obscured the mouth of the cave, and out of the midst of it the dragon himself, shining, sea-blue, magnificent, pranced splendidly forth; and everybody said, "Oo-oo-oo!" as if he had been a mighty rocket! His scales were glittering, his long spiky tail lashed his sides, his claws tore up the turf and sent it flying high over his back, and smoke and fire incessantly jetted from his angry nostrils. "Oh, well done, dragon!" cried the Boy, excitedly. "Didn't think he had it in him!" he added to himself.

St. George lowered his spear, bent his head, dug his heels into his horse's sides, and came thundering over the turf. The dragon charged with a roar and a squeal, — a great blue whirling combination of coils and snorts and clashing jaws and spikes and fire.

"Missed!" yelled the crowd. There was a moment's entanglement of golden armour and blue-green coils, and spiky tail, and then the great horse, tearing at his bit, carried the Saint, his spear swung high in

the air, almost up to the mouth of the cave.

The dragon sat down and barked viciously, while St. George with difficulty pulled his horse round into position.

"End of Round One!" thought the Boy. "How well they managed it! But I hope the Saint won't get excited. I can trust the dragon all right. What a regular play-actor the fellow is!"

St. George had at last prevailed on his horse to stand steady, and was looking round him as he wiped his brow. Catching sight of the Boy, he smiled and nodded, and held up three fingers for an instant.

"It seems to be all planned out," said the Boy to himself. "Round Three is to be the finishing one, evidently. Wish it could have lasted a bit longer. Whatever's that old fool of a dragon up to now?"

The dragon was employing the interval in giving a ramping-performance for the benefit of the crowd. Ramping, it should be explained, consists in running round and round in a wide circle, and sending waves and ripples of movement along the whole length of your spine, from your pointed ears right down to the spike at the end of your long tail. When you are covered with blue scales, the effect is particularly pleasing; and the Boy recollected the dragon's recently expressed wish to become a social success.

St. George now gathered up his reins and began to move forward, dropping the point of his spear and settling himself firmly in the saddle.

"Time!" yelled everybody excitedly; and the dragon, leaving off his ramping, sat up on end, and began to leap from one side to the other with huge ungainly bounds, whooping like a Red Indian. This naturally disconcerted the horse, who swerved violently, the Saint only just saving himself by the mane; and as they shot past the dragon delivered a vicious snap at the horse's tail which sent the poor beast careering madly far over the Downs, so that the language of the Saint, who had lost a stirrup, was fortunately inaudible to the general assemblage.

Round Two evoked audible evidence of friendly feeling towards the dragon. The spectators were not slow to appreciate a combatant who could hold his own so well and clearly wanted to show good sport; and many encouraging remarks reached the ears of our friend as he strutted to and fro, his chest thrust out and his tail in the air, hugely enjoying his new popularity.

St. George had dismounted and was

tightening his girths, and telling his horse, with quite an Oriental flow of imagery, exactly what he thought of him, and his relations, and his conduct on the present occasion; so the Boy made his way down to the Saint's end of the line, and held his spear for him.

"It's been a jolly fight, St. George!" he said with a sigh. "Can't you let it last a bit longer?"

"Well, I think I'd better not," replied the Saint. "The fact is, your simple-minded old friend's getting conceited, now they've begun cheering him, and he'll forget all about the arrangement and take to playing the fool, and there's no telling where he would stop. I'll just finish him off this round."

He swung himself into the saddle and took his spear from the Boy. "Now don't you be afraid," he added kindly. "I've marked my spot exactly, and he's sure to give me all the assistance in his power, because he knows it's his only chance of being asked to the banquet!"

St. George now shortened his spear, bringing the butt well up under his arm; and, instead of galloping as before, trotted smartly towards the dragon, who crouched at his approach, flicking his tail till it cracked in the air like a great cart-whip. The Saint wheeled as he neared his opponent and circled warily round him, keeping his eye on the spare place; while the dragon, adopting similar tactics, paced with caution round the same circle, occasionally feinting with his head. So the two sparred for an opening, while the spectators maintained a breathless silence.

Though the round lasted for some minutes, the end was so swift that all the Boy saw was a lighting movement of the Saint's arm, and then a whirl and a confusion of spines, claws, tail, and flying bits of turf. The dust cleared away, the spectators whooped and ran in cheering, and the Boy made out that the dragon was down, pinned to the earth by the spear, while St. George had dismounted, and stood astride of him.

It all seemed so genuine that the Boy ran in breathlessly, hoping the dear old dragon wasn't really hurt. As he approached, the dragon lifted one large eyelid, winked solemnly, and collapsed again. He was held fast to earth by the neck, but the Saint had hit him in the spare place agreed upon, and it didn't even seem to tickle.

"Bain't you goin' to cut 'is 'ed orf, master?" asked one of the applauding

crowd. He had backed the dragon, and naturally felt a trifle sore.

"Well, not *to-day*, I think," replied St. George, pleasantly. "You see, that can be done at *any* time. There's no hurry at all. I think we'll all go down to the village first, and have some refreshment, and then I'll give him a good talking-to, and you'll find he'll be a very different dragon!"

At that magic word *refreshment* the whole crowd formed up in procession and silently awaited the signal to start. The time for talking and cheering and betting was past, the hour for action had arrived. St. George, hauling on his spear with both hands, released the dragon, who rose and shook himself and ran his eye over his spikes and scales and things, to see that they were all in order. Then the Saint mounted and led off the procession, the dragon following meekly in the company of the Boy, while the thirsty spectators kept at a respectful interval behind.

There were great doings when they got down to the village again, and had formed up in front of the inn. After refreshment St. George made a speech, in which he informed his audience that he had removed their direful scourge, at a great deal of trouble and inconvenience to himself, and now they weren't to go about grumbling and fancying they'd got grievances, because they hadn't. And they shouldn't be so fond of fights, because next time they might have to do the fighting themselves, which would not be the same thing at all. And there was a certain badger in the inn stables which had got to be released at once, and he'd come and see it done himself. Then he told them that the dragon had been thinking over things, and saw that there were two sides to every question, and he wasn't going to do it any more, and if they were good perhaps he'd stay and settle down there. So they must make friends, and not be prejudiced, and go about fancying they knew everything there was to be known, because they didn't, not by a long way. And he warned them against the sin of romancing, and making up stories and fancying other people would believe them just because they were plausible and highly coloured. Then he sat down, amidst much repentant cheering, and the dragon nudged the Boy in the ribs and whispered that he couldn't have done it better himself. Then every one went off to get ready for the banquet.

Banquets are always pleasant things, consisting mostly, as they do, of eating and

drinking; but the specially nice thing about a banquet is, that it comes when something's over, and there's nothing more to worry about, and to-morrow seems a long way off. St. George was happy because there had been a fight and he hadn't had to kill anybody; for he didn't really like killing, though he generally had to do it. The dragon was happy because there had been a fight, and so far from being hurt in it he had won popularity and a sure footing in society. The Boy was happy because there had been a fight, and in spite of it all his two friends were on the best of terms. And all the others were happy because there had been a fight, and—well, they didn't require any other reasons for their happiness. The dragon exerted himself to say the right thing to everybody, and proved the life and soul of the evening; while the Saint and the Boy, as they looked on, felt that they were only assisting at a feast of which the honour and the glory were entirely the dragon's. But they didn't mind that, being good fellows, and the dragon was not in the least proud or forgetful. On the contrary, every ten minutes or so he leant over towards the Boy and said impressively: "Look here! you *will* see me home afterwards, won't you?" And the Boy always nodded, though he had promised his mother not to be out late.

At last the banquet was over, the guests had dropped away with many good-nights and congratulations and invitations, and the dragon, who has seen the last of them off the premises, emerged into the street followed by the Boy, wiped his brow, sighed, sat down in the road and gazed at the stars. "Jolly night it's been!" he murmured. "Jolly stars! Jolly little place this! Think I shall just stop here. Don't feel like climbing up any beastly hill. Boy's promised to see me home. Boy had better do it then! No responsibility on my part. Responsibility all Boy's!" And his chin sank on his broad chest and he slumbered peacefully.

"Oh, get up, dragon," cried the Boy, piteously. "You *know* my mother's sitting up, and I'm so tired, and you made me promise to see you home, and I never knew what it meant or I wouldn't have done it!" And the Boy sat down in the road by the side of the sleeping dragon, and cried.

The door behind them opened, a stream of light illumined the road, and St. George, who had come out for a stroll in the cool night-air, caught sight of the two figures

sitting here—the great motionless dragon and the tearful little Boy.

"What's the matter, Boy?" he inquired kindly, stepping to his side.

"Oh, it's this great lumbering *pig* of a dragon!" sobbed the Boy. "First he makes me promise to see him home, and then he says I'd better do it, and goes to sleep! Might as well try to see a *haystack* home! And I'm so tired, and mother's—" here he broke down again.

"Now don't take on," said St. George. "I'll stand by you, and we'll *both* see him home. Wake up, dragon!" he said sharply shaking the beast by the elbow.

The dragon looked up sleepily. "What a night, George!" he murmured; "what a——"

"Now look here, dragon," said the Saint, firmly. "Here's this little fellow waiting to see you home, and you *know* he ought to have been in bed these two hours, and what his mother'll say I don't know, and anybody but a selfish pig would have *made* him go to bed long ago——"

"And he *shall* go to bed!" cried the dragon, starting up. "Poor little chap, only fancy his being up at this hour! It's a shame, that's what it is, and I don't think, St. George, you've been very considerate—but come along at once, and don't let us have any more arguing or shilly-shallying. You give me hold of your hand, Boy—thank you, George, an arm up the hill is just what I wanted!"

So they set off up the hill arm-in-arm, the Saint, the Dragon, and the Boy. The lights in the little village began to go out; but there were stars, and a late moon, as they climbed to the Downs together. And, as they turned the last corner and disappeared from view, snatches of an old song were borne back on the night-breeze. I can't be certain which of them was singing but I *think* it was the Dragon!

"Here we are at your gate," said the man, abruptly, laying his hand on it. "Good-night. Cut along in sharp, or you'll catch it!"

Could it really be our own gate? Yes, there it was, sure enough, with the familiar marks on its bottom bar made by our feet when we swung on it.

"Oh, but wait a minute!" cried Charlotte. "I want to know a heap of things. Did the dragon really settle down. And did——"

"There isn't any more of that story," said the man, kindly but firmly. "At least, not to-night. Now be off! Good-bye!"

"Wonder if it's all true?" said Charlotte, as we hurried up the path. "Sounded dreadfully like nonsense, in parts!"

"P'raps it's true for all that," I replied encouragingly.

Charlotte bolted in like a rabbit, out of the cold and the dark; but I lingered a moment in the still, frosty air, for a backward glance at the silent white world without, ere I changed it for the land of firelight and cushions and laughter. It was the day for choir-practice, and carol-time was at hand, and a belated member

was passing homewards down the road, singing as he went:—

"Then St. George: ee made rev'rence: in the stable
^{so} dim,
Oo vanquished the dragon: so fearful and grim.
So-o grim: and so-o fierce: that now may we say
All peaceful is our wakin': on Chri-istmas Day!"

The singer receded, the carol died away. But I wondered, with my hand on the door-latch, whether that was the song, or something like it, that the dragon sang as he toddled contentedly up the hill.



The Sandpiper

By CELIA THAXTER

ACROSS the narrow beach we flit,
One little sandpiper and I,
And fast I gather, bit by bit,
The scattered driftwood bleached and dry.
The wild waves reach their hands for it,
The wild wind raves, the tide runs high,
As up and down the beach we flit,—
One little sandpiper and I.

Above our heads the sullen clouds
Scud black and swift across the sky;
Like silent ghosts in misty shrouds
Stand out the white lighthouses high.
Almost as far as eye can reach
I see the close-reefed vessels fly,
As fast we flit along the beach,—
One little sandpiper and I.

I watch him as he skims along,
Uttering his sweet and mournful cry.
He starts not at my fitful song,
Or flash of fluttering drapery.
He has no thought of any wrong;
He scans me with a fearless eye.
Stanch friends are we, well tried and strong,
The little sandpiper and I.

Comrade, where wilt thou be to-night
When the loosed storm breaks furiously?
My driftwood fire will burn so bright!
To what warm shelter canst thou fly?
I do not fear for thee, though wroth
The tempest rushes through the sky:
For are we not God's children both,
Thou, little sandpiper, and I?



So They Say

"BARON BEAVERBROOK":
*Arrested on charges of having married
50 or more American women, under as
many aliases, and of swindling them
out of a million dollars*

"The average woman becomes more and more ambitious as her husband becomes successful in business. On the other hand, the more successful he becomes, the more time he devotes to business and the less to his wife. Right here is where I come in."

A NEW YORK MOTHER:
of a two-year-old boy

"Yes, Donald goes to that new school. He's two now. He got A in climbing and sliding, but he failed in his pouring. He's so awkward with his sand."

RICHARD KEARTON:
*F. Z. S., English naturalist, author,
lecturer*

"I doubt if science has increased the total sum of human happiness."

ALONZO B. SEE:
*Manufacturer of elevators, and critic of
modern education*

"To make women normal again, after they have spent four years at college studying psychoanalysis, inferiority complex, the hereness of the there, and the wentness of the gone, is an impossibility."

WILLIAM A. BRADY:
*Theatrical producer for nearly forty
years*

"If any great geniuses of the American theater are to come from now on they will be created in, and come from, this 'little theater' movement. I don't mean acting geniuses alone, but playwrights, musicians, scene painters, decorators, dressmakers."

KARL A. BICKEL:
President, United Press Association

"Advertising brought the British workman to the determination to improve his scale of living, and bred in his mind a disgust for insanitary quarters and for the dull, colourless, and dreary life that had been his lot."

S. S. KRESGE:
*who, after making a hundred millions
out of his chain-stores, has just given
twenty-five millions to a Foundation for
public service*

"The real picture is one showing a road down hill to success rather than the old idea of everlastingly climbing. . . . If the start has been righteous and if the teachings of the Bible are used together with common sense, the beginner strolls down the path of life to the glorious sunset—a success."

HERBERT G. SMYTH:
*Lawyer, defending Earl Carroll in a
"bath-tub" case*

"Gentlemen of the Jury, I know of no more dangerous and charming thing in the world than a pretty woman. I suspect there is no situation in life that cannot be changed when it concerns a pretty woman."

HORACE C. STILWELL:
Florida Newspaper editor and publisher

"We have been selling gold mines in Florida, and hardly any of us has had time to stop and develop them. . . . A few have—and in every instance where a purchaser has stopped to develop . . . a profit has resulted."

GEORGE B. LUKS:

Former newspaper correspondent; painter, who has won many medals and prizes

"Formula? You bet I have a formula. I see what I want and go after it."

LORD DEWAR:

First Baron Dewar; head of a famous Scotch distillery; author of "Prohibition in the U. S., Canada, and New Zealand"

"If you are lavish, people say you are a spendthrift. If you practise economy, you are Scotch."

JOHN ERSKINE:

Professor of English at Columbia University; author of "The Private Life of Helen of Troy"

"Parents are a necessary evil—more evil than necessary. . . . The idea that children owe their parents something for having put them in the world is a myth."

HARRY F. WARD:

M. E. minister, author, editor—member of American Civil Liberties Union

"We hold it demonstrated by experience that foolish and violent speech is less dangerous than the attempt to control it by repressive legislation or bureaucratic restrictions."

HARRY A. GORDON:

New York City Magistrate—reproving a parent who taught his children at home because they brought back bad language and pediculosis from the public school

"Our public schools are wonderful. I attended them myself. Look at me now—I'm a Judge!"

TEWFIK RUSHDI BEY:

Foreign Minister of Turkey

"We are at once the easternmost country of Europe and the westernmost country of Asia. The map dictates our foreign policy. We cannot tie up exclusively with either continent."

ANNA PAVLOWA:

Genius of the dancing art

"The function of dancing is to give man a sight of an unreal world, beautiful, dazzling as his dreams. For dancing is pure romance."

ARNOLD LUNN:

English author, skiing expert, and mountain-climber

"Darkness often reveals more than it hides."

SIR OLIVER LODGE:

Scientist, author, spiritualist

"The universe is great and splendid beyond our imaginations. Let us not take a pitiful, mean outlook. Nothing is too great or too good to be true."

AARON BOWEN:

Son-in-law of Mrs. Sarah Bosworth Bradley, who ascribes reaching her 108th birthday to having kept with her windows shut "for the last hundred years at least."

"If mother'd ever had a window open she'd have caught cold and died fifty or sixty years ago. Course, I'm only seventy-five, but I never had a window open at night in my life."

P. J. FLANNIGAN:

Who won the Eastern Ice Association's gold watch for the oldest swimmer in New York

"You see, the sudden changes of temperature are very hard to get used to. Now if a weak little man gets into this business, he can't stand it. He gets pneumonia or something. But I've never even had a cold,—at least, not to speak of. . . . You have to step lively to keep ahead of melting ice."

G. S. ZINOVIEFF:

Chairman of the Communist International, at the Moscow Conference

"Unlike England, the American labour school is not Fabian nor religious. The leaders there are madly hostile against Communism. They do not represent the philosophic intelligentsia, but are business leaders, resembling Fascists, ready to fight us with all means."

DEAN INGE:

of St. Paul's, London; agropos of clerical efforts to end the General Strike

"The less the Church bleats the better."

ROMAIN ROLLAND:

French novelist, in the "New Student"

"All history is the history of conquerors, of victorious races, victorious classes, and victorious men in these races and classes."

DAVID MITCHELL:
Physician

"Fear is worse than useless. . . . It exercises a devastating influence. . . . It is a crime against childhood for any adult to permit the existence of fear in a child's mind."

EDGAR W. HOWE:
Editor and publisher, "E. W. Howe's Monthly"

"When I am sitting in a room with women I note they are always pulling down their skirts. Why didn't they make them longer before they came?"

OWEN D. YOUNG:
Lawyer; Chairman of Board, General Electric Company

"Why is it that a concern which does not render service enough to make profits is permitted to use our labour, of which we have not too great a supply, or our capital, which is always difficult to get, for an unprofitable use to society?"

"TIM" LOWRY:
Football star at Northwestern University

"We saw that bunch of big husky Indiana players coming toward us, and we knew something had to be done quick. 'Fellows,' I said, 'I believe in prayer and we better pray.' We did and won a great victory. When the next game came, every fellow prayed again."

C. H. BRETHERTON:
English author

"The American pie—a thin layer of squashed fruit between two slabs of underdone dough—is a dietetic bomb. . . . It is the prime cause of American divorce."

JOHN ROACH STRATON:
Baptist minister and militant reformer

"If I were asked to say in a single sentence what we should do about jazz, I would reply that we ought to consign it to a hotter place than this earth. "It is naturally and inherently bad and vicious."

MME. MARGUERITE D'ALVAREZ:
Peruvian Contralto

"Jazz is the real rhythm of modern life. New York is jazz incarnate. Its architecture, its streets, its business, its life—all sparkle to a syncopated rhythm. Jazz is only bad to those who have persuaded themselves that the highest life is in the suppression of joy and gladness."

ALBERT EDWARD WIGGAM:
Author and lecturer, in "Collier's";

"Education is a thing that enables a man to get along without the use of intelligence."

T. P. O'CONNOR:
Member of British Parliament for forty years; editor and author

"I am sorry to say that, after a very long experience, I have come to the conclusion that the standard of public taste in the matter of entertainment is rather low."

WALTER HAGEN:
United States open Golf Champion, 1914, 1919; British open Champion, 1922, 1924

"It isn't the mistake in games that costs so much. It's the mental attitude after the mistake is made that makes or breaks."

FRANK COFFEE:
Traveler, who has circled the globe twenty-two times

"In Mauna Loa's great outbreak in 1880 . . . Princess Ruth, weighing about 400 pounds, proceeded to Hilo with a fat white pig. . . . A large part of Honolulu went on an excursion boat equipped with a brass band, to see the outcome. Princess Ruth went to a spot one mile north of Hilo and the white pig went with her: She proclaimed that the lava would stop at that particular point—and, what is more to the point, it did."

"MARGERY":
Much-discussed Boston spirit medium

"What amazing things people are willing to believe in order to avoid believing the things they don't want to believe!"

H. T. STOWELL
of Buffalo, in "Forum"

"Americanism is the national inferiority complex of the citizens of the United States."

HEYWOOD BROWN:
Columnist, in the N. Y. "World"

RATA MELI SALABOGI:
Fiji chief, after his first visit to the United States

WILLIAM T. HORNADAY:
Director of New York Zoological Park for thirty years, as he retired

FRANCES GILCHRIST WOOD:
American writer

COUNT AISUKE KABAYAMA:
Japanese capitalist and lawmaker

DR. BERNARD SACHS:
New York neurologist and author

SINCLAIR LEWIS:
In declining the Pulitzer award for one of his own novels

JUSTICE WILLIAM YOUNG:
on the application of Charles Wheeler's third wife to move his body from beside that of a former wife

WILLIAM MCDODO:
Chief City Magistrate of New York

FRIEDRICH WILHELM:
Former Crown Prince of Germany

ANDREW W. MELLON:
Secretary of the Treasury, and capitalist

HENRY SLOANE COFFIN:
Presbyterian minister, professor of theology, President, Union Theological Seminary, and author

KAKICHI IKEDA:
Pres., Tokio Ivory Art Objects Dealers' Ass'n.; on the "elephant mass" at the Buddhist Gokuda Temple, April 15, 1926

DUNCAN AIKMAN:
in "Harper's"

HUGH DILLMAN:
Upon his marriage to the widow of Horace E. Dodge, reputed one of the wealthiest women in the world

"I do not know of anyone who ever lost his soul laughing."

"I sat in a chair by a table. A man placed food before me. I ate it in one town and swallowed it in the next."

"Of all the animals that breathe, the one I hate twenty-four hours a day is the domestic rat. And his vices all come from association with men."

"If America were made up of 'Main Streets,' just how far do you suppose we would have gotten in the past two hundred and fifty years? We have nothing to equal the spirit of those people who settled our West."

"I believe your missionaries who come to teach us are generally of that type of people who could earn a living in no other way."

"Child study to-day is oversexed. . . . Suppression is bad, but repression is beneficial. You should repress yourself so that your neighbour may express himself."

"All prizes like all titles are dangerous. The seekers for prizes tend . . . to write this, or timorously to avoid writing that, in order to tickle the prejudices of a haphazard committee."

"I do not know how I shall decide this matter, but I feel that one burial is enough for any man."

"Why, when I was a boy, you could spot a bad character at once when you looked at him. But to-day the gunmen, murderers and robbers are suave, well-dressed young men who look like fashion-plates."

"I feel certain that the final onslaught against domination of Anglo-Saxon civilization, should it ever come, will start from the Malay States."

"It is organized industry that has brought about the present unprecedented development in this country. . . . We now consider as necessities many things that were luxuries to the preceding generation."

"A Yale man without religion is not a genuine Yale man."

"We feel that we are greatly indebted to elephants which have been furnishing ivory for us to carry on our business. It is for this reason that we are going to comfort the spirits of the elephants by holding a Mass for them."

"First of all generations of women since the Amazons, the Flapper grew up without an inferiority sense based on sex."

"I left the stage three years ago, although I love it with all my heart. One has to work too hard for what one gets out of it. I have found that there is more money to be made in other pursuits."



Colonel Carter of Cartersville

By

F. HOPKINSON SMITH

Illustrations by E. W. Kemble

CHAPTER IV

THE ARRIVAL OF A TRUE SOUTHERN LADY

MISTRESS yer, sah! Come yis-tidd'y mawnin'."

How Chad beamed all over when this simple statement fell from his lips!

I had not seen him since the night when he stood behind my chair and with bated breath whispered his anxieties lest the second advent of "de grocerman" should bring dire destruction to the colonel's household.

To-day he looked ten years younger. His kinky gray hair, generally knotted into little wads, was now divided by a well-defined path starting from the great wrinkle in his forehead and ending in a dense tangle of underbrush that no comb dared penetrate. His face glistened all over. His mouth was wide open, showing a great cavity in which each tooth seemed to dance with delight. His jacket was as white and stiff as soap and starch could make it, while a cast-off cravat of the colonel's—double starched to suit Chad's own ideas of propriety—was tied in a single knot, the two ends reaching to the very edge of each ear. To crown all, a red carnation flamed away on the lapel of his jacket, just above an outside pocket, which held in check a pair of white cotton gloves bulging with importance and eager for use. Every time

he bowed he touched with a sweep both sides of the narrow hall.

It was the first time in some weeks that I had seen the interior of the colonel's cozy dining-room by daylight. Of late my visits had been made after dark, with drawn curtains, lighted candles, and roaring wood fires. But this time it was in the morning,—and a bright, sunny, love'y spring morning at that,—with one window open in the L and the curtains drawn back from the other; with the honeysuckle beginning to bud, its long runners twisting themselves inquiringly through the half-closed shutters as if anxious to discover what all this bustle inside was about.

It was easy to see that some other touch besides that of the colonel and his faithful man-of-all-work had left its impress in the bachelor apartment. There was a general air of order apparent. The irregular line of foot-gear which decorated the wash-board of one wall, beginning with a pair of worsted slippers and ending with a wooden bootjack, was gone. Whisk-brooms and dusters that had never known a restful nail since they entered the colonel's service were now suspended peacefully on convenient hooks. Dainty white curtains, gathered like a child's frock, flapped lazily against the broken green blinds, while some sprays of arbutus, plucked by Miss Nancy on her way to the railroad station, drooped about a tall glass on the mantel.

Chad had solved the mystery,—Aunt Nancy came yesterday.

I found the table set for four, its chief feature being a tray bearing a heap of egg-shell cups and saucers I had not seen before, and an old-fashioned tea-urn humming a tune all to itself.

"De colonel's out, but he comin' back d'rekly," Chad said eagerly, all out of breath with excitement. Then followed the information that Mr. Fitzpatrick was coming to breakfast, and that he was to tell Miss Nancy the moment we arrived. He then reduced the bulge in his outside pocket by thrusting his big hands into his white gloves, gave a sidelong glance at the flowers in his buttonhole, and bore my card aloft with the air of a cup-bearer serving a princess.

A soft step on the stair, the rustle of silk, a warning word outside: "Look out for dat lower step, mistress—dat's it"; and Miss Nancy entered the room.

No, I am wrong. She became a part of it; as much so as the old andirons and the easy chairs and the old-fashioned mantel-pieces, the snowy curtains and the trailing vine. More so when she gave me the slightest dip of a courtesy and laid her dainty, wrinkled little hand in mine, and said in the sweetest possible voice how glad she was to see me after so many years, and how grateful she felt for all my kindness to the dear colonel. Then she sank into a quaint rocking-chair that Chad had brought down behind her, rested her feet on a low stool that mysteriously appeared from under the table, and took her knitting from her reticule.

She had changed somewhat since I last saw her, but only as would an old bit of precious stuff that grew the more mellow and harmonious in tone as it grew the older. She had the same silky gray hair—a trifle whiter, perhaps; the same frank, tender mouth, winning wherever she smiled; the same slight, graceful figure; and the same manner—its very simplicity a reflex of that refined and quiet life she had always led. For hers had been an isolated life, buried since her girlhood in a great house far away from the broadening influences of a city, and saddened by the daily witness of a slow decay of all she had been taught to revere. But it had been a life so filled with the largeness of generous deeds that its returns had brought her the love and reverence of every living soul she knew.

While she sat and talked to me of her

journey I had time to enjoy again the quaintness of her dress,—the quaintness of forty years before. There was the same old-fashioned, soft gray silk with up-and-down stripes spotted with sprigs of flowers, the lace cap with its frill of narrow pink ribbons and two wide pink strings that fell over the shoulders, and the handkerchief of India mull folded across the breast and fastened with an amethyst pin. Her little bits of feet—they were literally so—were incased in white stockings and heelless morocco slippers bound with braid.

But her dress was never sombre. She always seemed to remember, even in her bright ribbons and silks, the days of her girlhood, when half the young men in the county were wild about her. When she moved she waited towards you a perfume of sweet lavender—the very smell that you remember came from your own mother's old-fashioned bureau drawer when she let you stand on tiptoe to see her pretty things. When you kissed her—and once I did—her cheek was as soft as a child's and fragrant with rose-water.

But I heard the colonel's voice outside, laughing with Fitz.

"Come in, suh, and see the dearest woman in the world."

The next instant he burst in dressed in his gala combination—white waistcoat and cravat, the old coat thrown wide open as if to welcome the world, and a bunch of red roses in his hand.

"Nancy, here's my dear friend Fitz, whom I have told you about—the most extraordinary man of modern times. Ah, Major! you here? Came in early, did you, so as to have aunt Nancy all to yo'self? Sit down, Fitz, right alongside of her." And he kissed her hand gallantly. "Isn't she the most delightful bit of old porcelain you ever saw in all yo' bawn days?"

Miss Nancy rose, made another of her graceful courtesies, and begged that neither of us would mind the colonel's raillery; she never could keep him in order. And she laughed softly as she gave her hand to Fitz, who touched it very much as if he quite believed the colonel's reference to the porcelain to be true.

"There you go, Nancy, 'busin' me like a dog, and here I've been a-trampin' the streets for a' hour lookin' for flowers for you! You are breakin' my heart, Miss Caarter, with yo' coldness and contempt. Another word and you shall not have a single bud." And the colonel gayly tucked a rose under her chin with a loving stroke of

his hand, and threw the others in a heap on her lap.

"Breakfast sarved, mistress," said Chad in a low voice.

The colonel gave his arm to his aunt with the air of a courtier; Fitz and I disposed ourselves on each side; Chad, with reverential mien, screwed his eyes up tight; and the colonel said grace with an increased fervor in his voice, no doubt remembering in his heart the blessing of the last arrival.

Throughout the entire repast the colonel was in his gayest mood, brimming over with anecdotes and personal reminiscences and full of his rose-coloured plans for the future.

Many things had combined to produce this happy frame of mind. There was first the Scheme, which had languished for weeks owing to the vise-like condition of the money market—another of Fitz's mendacious excuses—and which had now been suddenly galvanized into temporary life by an inquiry made by certain bankers who were seeking an outlet for English capital, and who had expressed a desire to investigate the "Garden Spot of Virginia." Only an "inquiry," but to the colonel the papers were already signed. Then there was the arrival of his distinguished guest, whom he loved devotedly and with a certain old-school gallantry and tenderness as picturesque as it was interesting. Last of all there was that important episode of the bills. For Miss Nancy, the night she arrived, had collected all the household accounts, including the highly esteemed pass-book—they were all of the one kind, unpaid—and had dispatched Chad early in the morning to the several creditors with his pocket full of crisp bank-notes.

Chad had returned from this liquidating tour, and the full meaning of that trusty agent's mission had dawned upon the colonel. He buttoned his coat tightly over his chest, straightened himself up, sought out his aunt, and said, with some dignity and a slightly injured air:—

"Nancy, yo' interfere'nce in my household affairs this mornin' was vely creditable to yo' heart, and deeply touches me; but if I thought you regarded it in any other light except as a short tempo'ary loan, it would offend me keenly. Within a few days, however, I shall receive a vely large amount of secu'ities from an English syndicate that is investigatin' my railroad. I shall then return the amount to you with interest, together with that other sum

which you loaned me when I left Caarter Hall."

The little lady's only reply was to slip her hand into his and kiss him on the forehead.

And yet that very morning he had turned his pockets inside out for the remains of the last dollar of the money she had given him when he left home. When it had all been raked together, and its pitiable insufficiency had become apparent, this dialogue took place:—

"Chad, did you find any money on the flo' when you breshed my clothes?"

"No, Colonel."

"Look round on the mantel-piece; perhaps I left some bills under the clock."

"Ain't none dar, sah."

Then Chad, with that same anxious look suddenly revived in his face, went below into the kitchen, mounted a chair, took down an old broken tea-cup from the top shelf, and poured out into his wrinkled palm a handful of small silver coin—his entire collection of tips, and all the money he had. This he carried to the colonel, with a lie in his mouth that the recording angel blotted out the moment it fell from his lips.

"Here's some change, Marsa George, I forgot to gib ye; been left ober from de marketin'."

And the colonel gathered it all in, and went out and spent every penny of it on roses for "dear Nancy!"

All of these things, as I have said, had acted like a tonic on the colonel, bracing him up to renewed efforts, and reacting on his guests, who in return did their best to make the breakfast a merry one.

Fitz, always delightful, was more brilliant than ever, his native wit, expressed in a brogue with verbal shadings so slight that it is hardly possible to give it in print, keeping the table in a roar; while Miss Nancy, encouraged by the ease and freedom of everybody about her, forgot for a time her quiet reserve, and was charming in the way she turned over the leaves of her own youthful experiences.

And so the talk went on until, with a smile to everybody, the little lady rose, called Chad, who stood ready with shawl and cushion, and, saying she would retire to her room until the gentlemen had finished smoking, disappeared through the doorway.

The talk had evidently aroused some memory long buried in the colonel's mind; for when Fitz had gone the dear old fellow picked up the glass holding the roses which he had given his aunt in the morning, and,

while repeating her name softly to himself, buried his face in their fragrance. Something, perhaps, in their perfume stirred that haunting memory the deeper, for he suddenly raised his head and burst out:—

"Ah, Major, you ought to have seen that woman forty years ago! Why, suh, she was just a rose herself!"

And then followed in disconnected scraps, as if he were recalling it to himself, with long pauses between, that story which I had heard hinted at before. A story never told the children, and never even whispered in Aunt Nancy's presence,—the one love affair of her life.

She and Robert had grown up together,—he a tall, brown-eyed young fellow just out of the university, and she a fair-haired, joyous girl with half the county at her feet. Nancy had not loved him at first, nor ever did until the day he had saved her life in that wild dash across country when her horse took fright, and he, riding neck and neck, had lifted her clear of her saddle. After that there had been but one pair of eyes and arms for her in the wide world. All of that spring and summer, as the colonel put it, she was like a bird pouring out her soul in one continuous song. Then there had come a night in Richmond,—the night of the ball,—followed by her sudden return home, hollow-eyed and white, and the mysterious postponement of the wedding for a year.

Everybody wondered, but no one knew, and only as the months went by did her spirits gain a little, and she begin to sing once more.

It was a great party on a neighbouring estate, amid the swim of the music and the whirl of soft lace. Suddenly loud voices and threats, a shower of cards flung at a man's face, an uplifted arm caught by the host. Then a hall door thrust open and a half-frenzied man with disordered dress staggering out. Then the startled face of a young girl all in white and a cry no one ever forgot:—

"Oh, Robert! Not again?"

Her long ride home in the dead of the night, Nancy alone in the coach, her escort—a distant cousin—on horseback behind.

Then the pursuit. The steady rise and fall of the hoof-beats back in the forest; the reining in of Robert's panting horse covered with foam; his command to halt; a flash, and then that sweet face stretched out in the road in the moonlight by the side of the overturned coach, the cousin bending over her with a bullet hole in his hat, and

Robert, ghastly white and sobered, with the smoking pistol in his hand.

Then the long, halting procession homeward in the gray dawn.

It was not so easy after this to keep the secret shut away; so one day, when the shock had passed,—her arms about her uncle's neck,—the whole story came out. She told of that other night there in Richmond, with Robert reeling and half crazed; of his promise of reform, and the postponement of the wedding, while she waited and trusted; so sad a story that the old uncle forgot all the traditions that bound Southern families, and sustained her in her determination never to see Robert again.

For days the broken-hearted lover haunted the place, while an out-bound ship waited in Norfolk harbour.

Even Robert's father, crushed and humiliated by it all, had made no intercession for him. But now, he begged, would she see his son for the last time, only that he might touch her hand and say good-by?

That last good-by lasted an hour, Chad walking his horse all the while before the porch door, until that tottering figure, holding to the railings and steadying itself, came down the steps.

A shutter thrown back, and Nancy at the open window watching him mount.

As he wheels he raises his hat. She pushes aside the climbing roses.

In an instant he has cleared the garden beds, and has reined in his horse just below her window-sill. Looking up into her face:—

"Nancy, for the last time, shall I stay?"

She only shakes her head.

"Then look, Nancy, look! This is your work!"

A gleam of steel in a clenched hand, a burst of smoke, and before Chad can reach him Nancy's lover lies dead in the flowers at her feet.

It had not been an easy story for the colonel. When he ceased he passed his hand across his forehead as if the air of the room stifled him. Then laying down his pipe, he bent once more over the slender vase, his face in the roses.

"May I come in?"

In an instant the colonel's old manner returned.

"May you come in, Nancy? Why, you dear woman, if you had stayed five minutes longer I should have gone for you myself. What! Another skein of yarn?"

"Yes," she said, seating herself. "Hold out your hands."

The loop slipped so easily over the colonel's arms that it was quite evident that the *rôle* was not new to him.

"Befo' I forget it, Nancy, Mr. Fitzpatrick was called suddenly away to attend to some business connected with my railroad, and left his vely kindest regards for you, and his apologies for not seein' you befo' he left."

Fitz had said nothing that resembled this, so far as my memory served me, but it was what he ought to have done, and the colonel always corrected such little slips of courtesy by supplying them himself.

"Politeness," he would sometimes say, "is becomin' rarer every day. I tell you, suh, the disease of bad manners is mo' contagious than the small-pox."

So the deception was quite pardonable in him.

"And what does Mr. Fitzpatrick think of the success of your enterprise, George?"

The colonel sailed away as usual with all his balloon topsails set, his sea-room limited only by the skein, while his aunt wound her yarn silently, and listened with a face expressive at once of deep interest and hope, mingled with a certain undefined doubt.

As the ball grew in size, she turned to me, and, with a penetration and practical insight into affairs for which I had not given her credit, began to dissect the scheme in detail. She had heard, she said, that there was lack of connecting lines and consequent absence of freight, as well as insufficient harbour facilities at Warrentown.

I parried the question as well as I could, begging off on the plea that I was only a poor devil of a painter with a minimum knowledge of such matters, and ended by referring her to Fitz.

The colonel, much to my surprise, listened to every word without opening his lips—a silence encouraged at first by his pride that she could talk so well, and maintained thereafter because of certain misgivings awakened in his mind as to the ultimate success of his pet enterprise.

When she had punctured the last of his little balloons, he laid his hand on her shoulder, and, looking into her face, said:—

"Nancy, you really don't mean that my railroad will *never* be built?"

"No, George; but suppose it should not earn its expenses?"

Her thoughts were new to the colonel. Nobody except a few foolish people in the Street, anxious to sell less valuable securities, and utterly unable to grasp the great

merits of the Cartersville and Warrentown Air Line Railroad plan, had ever before advanced any such ideas in his presence. He loosened his hands from the yarn, and took a seat by the window. His aunt's misgivings had evidently so thoroughly disturbed him that for an instant I could see traces of a certain offended dignity, coupled with a nervous anxiety lest her inquiries had shaken my own confidence in his scheme.

He began at once to reassure me. There was nothing to be uneasy about. Look at the bonds! Note the perfect safety of the plan of finance—the earlier coupons omitted the subsequent peace of the investor! The peculiar location of the road, with the ancestral estates dotted along its line! The dignity of the several stations! He could hear them now in his mind called out as they whistled down brakes: "Carter Hall! Barboursville! Talcott!" No; there was nothing about the road that should disturb his aunt. For all that a still more anxious look came into his face. He began pacing the floor, buried in deep thought, his thumbs hooked behind his back. At last he stopped and took her hand.

"Dear Nancy, if anything should happen to you it would break my heart. Don't be angry, it is only the major; but yo' talk with him has so disturbed me that I am determined to secure you against personal loss."

Miss Nancy raised her eyes wonderingly. She evidently did not catch his meaning.

"You have been good enough, my dear, to advance me certain sums of money which I still owe. I want to pay these now."

"But, George, you"—

"My dearest Nancy,"—and he stooped down, and kissed her cheek,—"*I* will have my way. Of co'se you didn't mean anything, only I can not let another hour pass with these accounts unsettled. Think, Nancy; it is my right. The delay affects my honour."

The little lady dropped her knitting on the floor, and looked at me in a helpless way.

The colonel opened the table drawer, and handed me pen and ink.

"Now, Major, take this sheet of paper and draw a note of hand."

I looked at his aunt inquiringly. She nodded her head in assent.

"Yes, if it pleases George."

I began with the usual form, entering the words "*I promise to pay,*" and stopped for instructions.

"Payable when, Colonel?" I asked.

"As soon as I get the money, suh."

"But you will do that anyhow, George."

"Yes, I know, Nancy; but I want to settle it in some safe way."

Then he gazed at the ceiling in deep thought.

"I have it, Major!" And the colonel seized the pen. The note read as follows:—

On demand I promise to pay Ann Carter the sum of six hundred dollars, value received, with interest at the rate of 6 per cent. from January 1st.

Payable as soon as possible.

GEORGE FAIRFAX CARTER.

I looked to see what effect this unexpected influx of wealth would produce on the dear lady; but the trustful smile never wavered.

She read to the very end the modest scrap of paper so suddenly enriched by the colonel's signature, repeated in a whisper to herself, "Payable as soon as possible," folded it with as much care as if it had been a Bank of England note, then thanked the colonel graciously, and tucked it in her reticule.

CHAPTER V

AN ALLUSION TO A YELLOW DOG

THE colonel's office, like many other of his valued possessions, was in fact the property of somebody else.

It really belonged to a friend of Fitzpatrick, who had become so impressed by the Virginian's largeness of manner and buoyancy of enthusiasm that he had whispered to Fitz to bring him in at once and give him any desk in the place; adding that "in a sagging market the colonel would be better than a war boom."

So the colonel moved in—not a very complicated operation in his case; his effects being confined to an old leather portfolio and a bundle of quill pens tied up with a bit of Aunt Nancy's white yarn. The following day he had nailed his visiting card above the firm's name in the corridor, hung his hat and coat on the proprietor's peg, selected a desk nearest the light, and was as much at home in five minutes as if he owned the whole building.

There was no price agreed upon. Once, when Fitz delicately suggested that all such rents were generally payable monthly, the colonel, after some difficulty in grasping the idea, had said:—

"I could not offer it, suh. These gentle-

men have treated me with a hospitality so generous that its memory will never fade from my mind. I can not bring our relations down to the level of bargain and sale, suh; it would be vulgar."

The colonel was perfectly sincere. As for himself he would have put every room in his own Carter Hall at their service for any purpose or for any length of time, and have slept in the woodshed himself; and he would as soon have demanded the value of the bottle of wine on his own table as ask pay for such trivial courtesies.

Nor did he stop at the rent. The free use of stamps, envelopes, paper, messenger service, and clerks were to him only evidences of a lordly sort of hospitality which endeared the real proprietor of the office all the more to him, because it recalled the lavish display of the golden days of Carter Hall.

"Permit a guest to stamp his own letters, suh? Never! Our servants attended to that."

Really he owed his host nothing. No office of its size in the Street made so much money for its customers in a bull market. Nobody lost heart in a tumble and was sold out—that is, nobody to whom the colonel talked. Once convince the enthusiastic Virginian that the scheme was feasible,—and how little eloquence was needed for that!—and the dear old fellow took hold with as much gusto as if it had been his own.

The vein in the copper mine was always going to widen out into a six-foot lead; never by any possibility could it grow any smaller. The trust shares were going up—"not a point or two at a time, gentlemen, but with the spring of a panther, suh." Of course the railroad earnings were a little off this month, but wait until the spring opened; "then, suh, you will see a revival that will sweep you off yo' feet."

Whether it was good luck, or the good heart that the colonel put into his friend's customers, the results were always the same. Singular as it may seem, his cheery word just at the right time tided over the critical moment many an uncertain watcher at the "ticker," often to an enlargement of his bank account. Nor would he allow any one to pay him for any service of this kind, even though he had spent days engrossed in their affairs.

"Take money, suh, for helpin' a friend out of a hole? My dear suh, I see you do not intend to be disco'teous; but look at me, suh! There's my hand; never refer to it again." And then he would offer the

offender his card in the hope, perhaps, that its ample record might furnish some further slight suggestion as to who he really was.

His popularity, therefore, was not to be wondered at. Everybody regarded him kindly, total stranger as he was, and although few of them believed to any extent in his "Garden Spot of Virginia," as his pet enterprise soon came to be known around the Street, everybody wished it well, and not a few would have started it with a considerable subscription could the colonel have managed the additional thousands required to set it on its financial legs.

Fitz never lost heart in the scheme,—that is, never when the colonel was about. As the weeks rolled by and one combination after the other failed, and the well-thumbed bundle of papers in the big blue envelope was returned with various comments: "In view of our present financial engagements we are unable to undertake your very attractive railroad scheme," or the more curt "Not suited to our line of customers," he would watch the colonel's face anxiously, and rack his brain for some additional excuse.

He always found one. Tight money, or news from Europe, or an over issue of similar bonds; next week it would be better. And the colonel always believed him. Fitz was his guiding star, and would lead him to some safe haven yet. This faith was his stronghold, and his only one.

This morning, however, there was a touch of genuine enthusiasm about Fitz. He rushed into the office, caught up the blue bundle and the map, nearly upsetting the colonel, who was balanced back in his chair with his long legs over the desk,—a favourite attitude when down town,—rushed out, and returned in half an hour with a fat body surmounted by a bald head fringed about with gray curls.

He was the advance agent of that mysterious combination known to the financial world as an "English syndicate," an elusive sort of commercial sea-serpent with its head in London and its tail around the globe. The "inquiry" which had so gladdened the colonel's heart the morning of the breakfast with Aunt Nancy had proceeded from this rotund negotiator.

The colonel had, as usual, started the road at Cartersville, and had gotten as far as the double-span iron bridge over the Tench when the rotund gentleman asked abruptly,—

"How far are you from a coal-field?"

The colonel lifted the point of his pen,

adjusted his glasses, and punched a hole in the rumpled map within a hair's breadth of a black dot labeled "Cartersville."

"Right there, suh. Within a stone's throw of our locomotives."

Fitz looked into the hole with as much astonishment as if it were the open mouth of the mine itself.

"Hard or soft?" said the stout man.

"Soft, suh, and fairly good coal, I understand, although I never used it, suh; my ancestors always burned wood."

Fitz heard the statement in undisguised wonder. In all his intercourse with the colonel he had never before known him to depart so much as a razor's edge from the truth.

The fat man communed with himself a moment, and then said suddenly, "I'll take the papers and give you an answer in a week," and hurried away.

"Do you really mean, Colonel," said Fitz, determined to pin him down, "that there is a single pound of coal in Cartersville?"

"Do I mean it, Fitz? Don't it crop out in half a dozen spots right on our own place? One half of my estate, suh, is a coal-field."

"You never told me a word about it."

"I don't know that I did, Fitz. But it has never been of any use to me. Besides, suh, we have plenty of wood. We never burn coal at Caarter Hall."

Fitz did not take that view of it. He went into an exhaustive cross-examination of the colonel on the coal question: who had tested it, the character of the soil, width of the vein, and dip of the land. This information he carefully recorded in a small book which he took from his inside pocket.

Loosened from Fitz's pinioning grasp, the colonel, entirely oblivious to his friend's sudden interest in the coal-field, and slightly impatient at the delay, bounded like a balloon with its anchors cut.

"An answer from the syndicate within a week! My dear Fitz, I see yo' drift. You have kept the Garden Spots for the foreign investors. That man is impressed, suh; I saw it in his eye."

The room began filling up with the various customers and loungers common to such offices: the debonair gentleman in check trousers and silk hat, with a rose in his button-hole, who dusts his trousers broadside with his cane—short of one hundred shares with 30 per cent. margin; the shabby old man with a solemn face who watches the ticker a moment and then wanders aimlessly out, looking more like

an underpaid clerk in a law office than the president of a crosstown railroad—long of one thousand shares with no margin at all; the nervous man who stops the messenger boys and devours the sales' lists before they can be skewered on the files,—not a dollar's interest either way; and, last of all, the brokers with little pads and nimble pencils.

The news that the great English syndicate was looking into the C. & W. A. L. R. R. was soon around the office, and each *habitué* had a bright word for the colonel, congratulating him on the favourable turn his affairs had taken.

All but old Klutchem, a broker in unlisted securities, who had been trying for weeks to get a Denver land scheme before the same syndicate, and had failed.

"Garden Spot bonds! Bosh! Road begins nowhere and ends nowhere. If any set of fools built it, the only freight it would get, outside of peanuts and sweet potatoes, would be razor-back hogs and niggers. I wouldn't give a yellow dog for enough of those securities to paper a church."

The colonel was on his feet in an instant.

"Mr. Klutchem, I cannot permit you, suh, to use such language in my presence unrebuked; you——"

"Now, see here, old Garden Spot, you know——"

The familiarity angered the colonel even more than the outburst.

"Caarter, suh,—George Fairfax Caarter," said the colonel with dignity.

"Well, Caarter, then," mimicking him, perhaps unconsciously. "You know——"

The intonation was the last straw. The colonel lost all control of himself. No man had ever thus dared before.

"Stop, Mr. Klutchem! What I know, suh, I decline to discuss with you. Yo' statements are false, and yo' manner of expressin' them quite in keepin' with the evident vulga'ity of yo' mind. If I can ascertain that you have ever had any claim to be considered a gentleman you will hear from me ag'in. If not, I shall rate you as rankin' with yo' yaller dog; and if you ever speak to me ag'in I will strike you, suh, with my cane."

And the colonel, his eyes flashing, strode into the private office with the air of a field marshal, and shut the door.

Klutchem looked around the room and into the startled faces of the clerks and bystanders, burst into a loud laugh, and left the office. On reaching the street he met Fitz coming in.

"Better look after old Garden Spot, Fitzpatrick. I poked holes in his road, and he wanted to swallow me alive."

CHAPTER VI

CERTAIN IMPORTANT LETTERS

WHEN I reached my lodgings that night I found this note, marked in the left hand corner "Important," and in the right-hand corner "In haste." A boy had left it half an hour before.

Be at my house at six, prepared to leave town at an hour's notice. CARTER.

I hurried to Bedford Place, dived through the tunnel, and found Fitzpatrick with his hand on the knocker. I followed him through the narrow hall and into the dining-room. He had a duplicate, also marked "Important" and "In haste," with this additional postscript: "Bring address of a prudent doctor."

"What does all this mean, Fitz?" I asked, spreading my letter out.

"I give it up, Major. The last I saw of the colonel was at two o'clock. He was then in the private office writing. That old wind-bag Klutchem had been worrying him, I heard, and the colonel sat down on him hard. But he had forgotten all about it when I talked to him, for he was as calm as a clock. But what the devil, Major, does he want with a doctor? Chad!"

"Yes, sah!"

"Was the Colonel sick this morning?"

"No, sah. Eat two b'iled eggs, and a dish ob ham half as big as yo' han'. He wa'n't sick, 'cause I yerd him singin' to hisself all fru de tunnel cl'ar out to de street."

We sat down and looked at each other. Could anybody else be sick? Perhaps Aunt Nancy had been taken ill on her way home to Virginia, and the doctor was for the dear lady. But why a "prudent doctor," and why both of us to go?

Fitz paced up and down the room, and I sat by the open window, and looked out into the dreary yard. The hands of the clock in the tall tower outlined against the evening sky were past the hour, long past, and yet no colonel.

Suppose he had been suddenly stricken down himself! Suppose——

The slamming of the outer gate, followed by a sentry-like tread in the tunnel, cut short our quandary, and the colonel's tall

figure emerged from the archway, and mounted the steps.

"What has happened?" we both blurted out, opening the door for him. "Who's sick? Where are we going?"

The colonel's only reply was a pressure of our hands. Then, placing his hat with great deliberation on the hall table, he drew off his gloves, waved us before him, and took his seat at the dining-room table.

Fitz and I, now thoroughly alarmed, and quite prepared for the worst, stood on each side.

The colonel dropped his hand into his inside pocket, and drew forth three letters.

"Gentlemen, you see befo' you a man on the verge of one of the great crises of his life. You heard, Fitz, of what occurred in my office this mornin'? You know how brutally I was assaulted, and how entirely without provocation on my part? I am a Caarter, suh, and a gentleman. No man can throw discredit on an enterprise bearin' my name without bein' answerable to me." And the colonel with great dignity opened one of the letters, and read as follows:—

51 BEDFORD PLACE.
Tuesday.

P. A. KLUTCHEM

Sir,—You took occasion this morning, in the presence of a number of my friends, to make use of certain offensive remarks reflecting upon a great commercial enterprise to which I have lent my name. This was accompanied by a familiarity as coarse as it was unwarranted. The laws of hospitality, which your own lack of good breeding violated, forbade my having you ejected from my office on the spot.

I now demand that satisfaction to which I am entitled, and I herewith inform you that I am ready at an hour's notice to meet you at any point outside the city most convenient to yourself.

Immediately upon your reply my friend Mr. T. B. Fitzpatrick will wait upon you and arrange the details. I name Major Thos. C. Yancey of Virginia as my second in the field.

I have the honour to remain,

Your obedient servant,
GEORGE FAIRFAX CARTER,
Late Colonel C. S. A.

"Suffering Moses!" cried out Fitz. "You are not going to send that?"

"It is sent, my dear Fitz. Mailed from my office this afternoon. This is a copy."

Fitz sank into a chair with both hands to his head.

"My object in sendin' for you both," the colonel continued, "was to be fully prepared should my antagonist select some early hour in the mornin'. In that case, Fitz, I shall have to rely on you alone, as Major Yancey can not reach here until the followin' day. That was why a

prudent doctor might be necessary at once."

Fitz's only reply was to thump his own head, as if the situation was too overpowering for words.

The colonel, with the same deliberation, opened the second letter. It was addressed to Judge Kerfoot, informing him of the nature of the "crisis," and notifying him of his (the colonel's) intention to appoint him sole executor of his estate should fate provide that vacancy.

The third was a telegram to Major Yancey summoning him at once "to duty on the field in an affair of honour."

"I am aware, Fitz, that some secrecy must be preserved in an affair of this kind Nawth—quite diffe'ent from our own country, and"—

"Secrecy! Secrecy! With that bellowing Klutchem? Don't you know that that idiot will have it all over the Street by nine o'clock to-morrow, unless he is ass enough to get scared, get out a warrant, and clap you into the Tombs before breakfast? O Colonel! How could you do a thing like this without letting us know?"

The colonel never changed a muscle in his face. He was courteous, even patient with Fitz, now really alarmed over the consequences of what he considered a most stupendous piece of folly. He could not, he said, sit in judgment on other gentlemen. If Fitz felt that way, it was doubtless due to his education. As for himself, he must follow the traditions of his ancestors.

"But at all events, my friends, my dear friends,"—and he extended both hands,— "we must not let this affair spoil our ap'tites. Nothing can now occur until the mornin', and we have ample time befo' daylight to make our preparations. Major, kindly touch the bell. Thank you! Chad, serve the soup."

So short a time elapsed between the sound of the bell and the thrusting in of Chad's head that it was quite evident the darty had been listening on the outside.

If, however, that worthy guardian of the honour and dignity of the Carter family was at all disturbed by what he had heard, there was nothing in his face to indicate it. On the contrary, every wrinkle was twisted into curls and curves of hilarity. He even went so far during dinner as to correct his master in so slight a detail as to where Captain Loynes was hit in the famous duel between the colonel's father and that distinguished Virginian.

"Are you shore, Chad, it was in the leg?"

"Yes, sah, berry sho'. You don't reckel-member, Colonel; but I had Marsa John's coat, an' wrop it round Cap'in Loynes when he was ca'aied to his ca'aige. Yes, sah, jes above the kneec. Marsa John picked him de fust shot."

"I remember now. Yes, you are right. The captain always walked a little lame."

"But, gentlemen,"—still with great dignity, but yet with an air as if he desired to relieve our minds from any anxiety concerning himself,—“by far the most interesting affair of honour of my time was the one in which I met Major Howard, a prominent member of the Fairfax County bar. Some words in the heat of debate led to a blow, and the next mornin' the handkerchief was dropped at the edge of a wood near the cote-house just as the sun rose over the hill. As I fired, the light blinded me, and my ball passed through his left arm. I escaped with a hole in my sleeve."

"Living yet?" said Fitz, repressing a smile.

"Certainly, suh, and one of the fo'most lawyers of our State. Vehy good friend of mine. Saw him on'y the week befo' I left home."

When dinner was served, I could detect no falling off in the colonel's appetite. With the exception of a certain nervous expectance, intensified when there was a rap at the front door, followed by a certain consequent disappointment when Chad announced the return of a pair of shoes—out to be half-soled—instead of the long delayed reply from the offending broker, he was as calm and collected as ever.

It was only when he took from his table drawer some sheets of foolscap, spread the nib of a quill pen on his thumb nail, and beckoned Fitz to his side, that I noticed any difference even in his voice.

"You know, Fitz, that my hand is not so steady as it was, and if I should fall, there are some things that must be attended to. Sit here and write these memoranda at my dictation."

Fitz drew nearer, and bent his ear in attention.

"I, George Fairfax Caarter of Caarter Hall, Caartersville, Virginia, bein' of sound mind"—

The pen scratched away.

"Everything down but the sound mind," said Fitz; "but go on."

"Do hereby," continued the colonel.

"What's all this for—another challenge?" said Fitz, looking up.

"No. Fitz,"—the colonel did not like

his tone,—“but a few partin' instructions which will answer in place of a more formally drawn will."

Fitz scratched on until the preamble was finished, and the unincumbered half of Carter Hall had been bequeathed to "my ever valued Aunt Ann Carter, spinster," and he had reached a new paragraph beginning with, "All bonds, stocks, and shares, whether founders', preferred, or common, of the corporation known as the Cartersville and Warrentown Air Line Railroad, particularly the sum of 25,000 shares of said company subscribed for by the undersigned, I hereby bequeath," when Fitz stopped and laid down his pen.

"You can't leave that stock. Not transferred to you yet."

"I know it, Fitz; but I have pledged my word to take it, and so far as I am concerned, it is mine."

Fitz looked over his glasses at me, and completed the sentence by which this also became "the exclusive property of Ann Carter, spinster." Then followed a clause giving his clothes to Chad, his seal and chain to Fitz, and his fowling-piece to me.

When the document was finished, the colonel signed it in a bold, round hand, and attested it by a burning puddle of red wax into which he plunged the old family seal. Fitz and I duly witnessed it, and then the colonel, with the air of a man whose mind had been suddenly relieved of some great pressure, locked the important document in his drawer, and handed the key to Fitz.

The change now in the colonel's manner was quite in keeping with the expression of his face. All his severe dignity, all the excess of responsibility and apparent studied calmness, were gone. He even became buoyant enough to light a pipe.

Presently he gave a little start as if suddenly remembering something until that moment overlooked, then he lighted a candle, and mounted the stairs to his bedroom. In a few minutes he returned, carrying in both hands a mysterious-looking box. This he placed with great care on the table and proceeded to unlock with a miniature key attached to a bunch which he invariably carried in his trousers pocket.

It was a square box made of mahogany, bound at each corner with brass, and bearing in the center of the top a lozenge-shaped silver tablet engraved with a Carter coat of arms, the letters "G. F. C." being beneath.

The colonel raised the lid and uncovered

the weapons that had defended the honour of the Carter family for two generations. They were the old-fashioned single-barrel kind, with butts like those of the pirates in a play, and they lay in a bed of faded red velvet surrounded by ramrods, bullet-moulds, a green pill-box labeled "G. D. Gun Caps," some scraps of wash leather, together with a copper powder-flask and a spoonful of bullets. The nipples were protected by little patches cut from an old kid glove.

The colonel showed with great pride a dent on one side of the barrel where a ball had glanced, saving some ancestor's life; then he rang the bell for Chad, and consigned the case to that hilarious dandy very much as the knight of a castle would place his trusty blade in the hands of his chief armourer.

"Want a tech o' ile in dese ba'als, Colonel," said Chad, examining them critically. "Got to keep dere moufs clean if you want dese dogs to bark right"; and he bore away the battery, followed by the colonel who went down into the kitchen to see if the fire was hot enough to cast a few extra bullets.

Fitz and I, being more concerned about devising some method to prevent the consequences of the colonel's rash act than in increasing the facilities for bloodshed, remained where we were and discussed the possible outcome of the situation.

We had about agreed that should Klutchem demand protection of the police, and the colonel be hauled up for violating the law of the State, I should go bail and Fitz employ the lawyer, when we were startled by a sound like the snap of a percussion-cap, followed by loud talking in the front yard.

First came a voice in a commanding tone: "Stand where you are! Drop yo' hand!"

Then Chad's "Don't shoot yit, Colonel."

Fitz and I started for the front door on a run, threw it open, and ran against Chad standing on the top step with his back to the panels. Over his head he held the stub of a candle flickering in the night wind. This he moved up and down in obedience to certain mysterious sounds which came rumbling out of the tunnel. Beside him on the stone step lay the brass-cornered mahogany dueling case with both weapons gone.

The only other light visible was the glowing eye of the tall tower.

"Where's the Colonel?" we both asked in a breath.

Chad kept the light aloft with one hand like an ebony Statue of Liberty, and pointed straight ahead into the tunnel with the other.

"Mo' to the left," came the voice.

Chad swayed the candle towards the broken-down fence, and sent his magnified shadow scurrying up the measly wall and halfway over to the next house.

"Sol! Now steady."

The dandy stood like the Sphinx, the light streaming atop of the tall candlestick, and then said from out one side of his mouth, "Spec' you gemmen better squat; she's gwineter bite."

Fitz peered into the tunnel, caught the gleam of a pistol held in a shadowy hand, made a clear leap, and landed out of range among the broken flower-pots. I sprang behind the hydrant, and at the same instant another cap snapped.

"Ah, gentlemen," said the voice emerging from the tunnel. "Had I been quite sure of myself I should have sent for you. I used to snuff a candle at fo'ty yards, and but that my powder is a little old I could do it ag'in."

CHAPTER VII

THE OUTCOME OF A COUNCIL OF WAR

WHEN early the next morning, Fitz and I arrived at the colonel's office he was already on hand and in a state of high nervous excitement. His coat, which, so far as a coat might, always expressed in its various combinations the condition of his mind, was buttoned close up under his chin, giving to his slender figure quite a military air. He was pacing the floor with measured tread; one hand thrust into his bosom, senator-fashion, the other held behind his back.

"Not a line, suh; not the scrape of a pen. If his purpose, suh, is to ignore me altogether, I shall horsewhip him on sight."

"Have you looked through the firm's mail?" said Fitz, glad of the respite.

"Eve'ywhere, suh—not a scrap."

"I will hunt him up"; and Fitz hurried down to Klutchem's office in the hope of either intercepting the challenge or of pacifying the object of the colonel's wrath, if by any good chance the letter should have been delayed until the morning.

In ten minutes he returned with the mystifying news that Mr. Klutchem's letters had been sent to his apartment the night before, and that a telegram had just

been received notifying his clerks that he would not be down that day.

"Escaped, suh, has he? Run like a dog! Like a yaller dog as he is! Where has he gone?"

"After a policeman, I guess," said Fitz.

The colonel stopped, and an expression of profound contempt overspread his face.

"If the gentleman has fallen so low, suh, that he proposes to go about with a constable taggin' after his heels, you can tell him, suh, that he is safe even from my boot."

Then he shut the door of the private office in undisguised disgust, leaving Fitz and me on the outside.

"What are we going to do, Major?" said Fitz, now really anxious. "I am positive that old Klutchem has either left town or is at this moment at police headquarters. If so, the dear old fellow will be locked up before sundown. Klutchem got that letter last night."

It was at once decided to head off the broker, Fitz keeping an eye on his office every half hour in the hope that he might turn up, and I completing the arrangements for the colonel's bail so as to forestall the possibility of his remaining in custody overnight.

Fitz spent the day in efforts to lay hands on Klutchem in order to prevent the law performing the same service for the colonel. My own arrangements were more easily completed, a friend properly possessed of sufficient real estate to make good his bond being in readiness for any emergency. One o'clock came, then three, then five; the colonel all the time keeping to the seclusion of his private office, Fitz watching for Klutchem, and I waiting in the larger office for the arrival of one of those clean-shaven, thick-set young men, in a Derby hat and sack-coat, the unexpected pair of handcuffs in his outside pocket.

The morning of the second day the situation remained still unchanged; Fitz had been unable to find Klutchem either at his office or at his lodgings, the colonel was still without any reply from his antagonist, and no young man answering to my fears had put in any appearance whatever.

The only new features were a telegram from Tom Yancey to the effect that he and Judge Kerfoot would arrive about noon, and another from the judge himself begging a postponement until they could reach the field.

Fitz read both dispatches in a corner by himself, with a face expressive of the effect these combined troubles were making upon

his otherwise happy countenance. He then crumpled them up in his hand and slid them into his pocket.

Up to this time not a soul in the office except the colonel, Fitz, and I had the faintest hint of the impending tragedy, it being one of the colonel's maxims that all affairs of honour demanded absolute silence.

"If yo' enemy falls," he would say, "it is mo' co'teous to say nothin' but good of the dead; and when you can not say that, better keep still. If he is alive let him do the talkin'—he will soon kill himself."

Fitz kept still because he felt sure if he could get hold of Klutchem the whole affair—either outcome, powder or law—could be prevented.

"Just as I had got the syndicate to look into the coal land," said Fitz, "which is the only thing the colonel's got worth talking about, here he goes and gets into a first-class cast-iron scrape like this. What a lovely old idiot he is! But I tell you, Major, something has got to be done about this shooting business right away! Here I have arranged for a meeting at the colonel's house on Saturday to discuss this new coal development, and the syndicate's agent is coming, and yet we can't for the life of us tell whether the colonel will be on his way home in a pine box or locked up here for trying to murder that old windbag. It's horrible!

"And to cap the climax,"—and he pulled out the crumpled telegrams,—"here come a gang of fire-eaters who will make it twice as difficult for me to settle anything. I wish I could find Klutchem!"

While he spoke the office door opened, ushering in a stout man with a red face, accompanied by an elderly white-haired gentleman, in a butternut suit. The red-faced man was carrying a carpet bag—not the Northern variety of wagon-curtain canvas, but the old-fashioned carpet kind with leather handles and a mouth like a catfish. The snuff-coloured gentleman's only charge was a heavy hickory cane and an umbrella with a waist like a market-woman's.

The red-faced man took off a wide straw hat and uncovered a head slightly bald and reeking with perspiration.

"I'm lookin' fur Colonel Caarter, suh. Is he in?"

Fitz pointed to the door of the private office, and the elderly man drew his cane and rapped twice. The colonel must have recognized the signal as familiar, for the

door opened with a spring, and the next moment he had them both by the hands.

"Why, Judge, this is indeed an honour—and Tom! Of co'se I knew you would come, Tom; but the Judge I did not expect until I got yo' telegram. Give me yo' bag, and put yo' umbrella in the corner.

"Here Fitz, Major; both of you come in here at once.

"Judge Kerfoot, gentlemen, of the district co'te of Fairfax County. Major Tom Yancey, of the army."

The civilities over, extra chairs were brought in, the door again closed, and a council of war was held.

Major Yancey's first word—but I must describe Yancey. Imagine a short, oily skinned, perpetually perspiring sort of man of forty, with a décolleté collar, a double-breasted waistcoat with glass buttons, and skin-tight light trousers held down to a pair of high-heeled boots by leather straps. The space between his waistband and his waistcoat was made good by certain puckering of his shirt anxious to escape the thrall of his suspenders. His paunch began and ended so suddenly that he constantly reminded you of a man who had swallowed a toy balloon.

Yancey's first word was an anxious inquiry as to whether he was late, adding, "I came ez soon ez I could settle some business mattahs." He had borrowed his traveling expenses from Kerfoot, who in turn had borrowed them from Miss Nancy, keeping the impending duel carefully concealed from that dear lady, and reading only such part of the colonel's letter as referred to the drawing up of some important papers in which he was to figure as chief executor.

"Late? No, Tom," said the colonel; "but the scoundrel has run to cover. We are watchin' his hole."

"You sholy don't tell me he's got away, Colonel?" replied Major Yancey.

"What could I do, Yancey? He hasn't had the decency to answer my letter."

Yancey, however, on hearing more fully the facts, clung to the hope that the Yankee would yet be smoked out.

"I of co'se am not familiar with the code as practiced Nawth—perhaps these delays are permis'ble; but in my county a challenge is a ball, and a man is killed or wounded ez soon ez the ink is dry on the papah. The time he has to live is only a mattah of muddy roads or convenience of seconds. Is there no way in which this can be fixed? I don't like to return home without an effo't bein' made."

The colonel, anxious to place the exact situation before Major Yancey so that he might go back fully assured that everything that a Carter could do had been done, read the copy of the challenge, gave the details of Fitz's efforts to find Klutchem, the repeated visits to his office, and finally the call at his apartments.

The major listened attentively, consulted aside with the judge, and then in an authoritative tone, made the more impressive by the decided way with which he hitched up his trousers, said:

"You have done all that a high-toned Southern gemman could do, Colonel. Yo' honour, suh, is without a stain."

In which opinion he was sustained by Kerfoot, who proved to be a ponderous sort of old-fashioned county judge, and who accentuated his decision by bringing down his cane with a bang.

While all this was going on in the private office under cover of profound secrecy, another sort of consultation of a much more public character was being held in the office outside.

A very bright young man—one of the clerks—held in his hand a large envelope, bearing on one end the printed address of the firm whose private office the colonel was at that moment occupying as a council chamber. It was addressed in the colonel's well-known round hand. This was not the fact, however, which excited interest; for the colonel never used any other envelopes than those of the firm.

The postman, who had just taken it from his bag, wanted to deliver it at its destination. The proprietor wanted to throw it back into the box for remailing, believing it to be a Garden Spot circular, and so of no especial importance. The bright young man wanted to return it to the colonel.

The bright young man prevailed, rapped at the door, and laid the letter under the colonel's nose. It bore this address:—

P. A. KLUTCHER, ESQ.,
Room 21, Star Building, Wall Street,
Immediate. New York

The colonel turned pale and broke the seal. Out dropped his challenge!

"Where did you get this?" he asked, aghast.

"From the carrier. It was held for postage."

Had a bombshell been exploded the effect could not have been more startling.

Yancey was the first man on his feet.

"And the scoundrel never got it! Here, Colonel, give me the letter. I'll go through this town like a fine-tooth comb but what I'll find him. He will never escape me. My name is Yancey, suh!"

The judge was more conservative. He had grave doubts as to whether a second challenge, after a delay of two days and two nights, could be sent at all. The traditions of the Carter family were a word and a blow, not a blow and a word in two days. To intrust the letter to the United States mail was a grave mistake; the colonel might have known that it would miscarry.

Fitz said grimly that letters always did, without stamps. The Government was running the post-office on a business basis, not for its health.

Yancey looked at Fitz as if the interruption wearied him, then, turning to the colonel, said that he was dumbfounded that a man who had been raised as Colonel Carter could have violated so plain a rule of the code. A challenge should always be delivered by the hand of the challenger's friend. It should never be mailed.

The poor colonel, who since the discovery of the unstamped letter had sat in a heap buried in his coat collar,—the military button having given way,—now gave his version of the miscarriage.

He began by saying that when his friend Major Yancey became conversant with all the facts he would be more lenient with him. He had, he said, found the proprietor's drawer locked, and, not having a stamp about him, had dropped the document into the mail-box with the firm's letters, presuming that the clerks would affix the tax the Government imposed. That the document had reached the post-office was evidenced by the date-stamp on the envelope. It seemed to him a picayune piece of business on the part of the authorities to detain it, and all for the paltry sum of two cents.

Major Yancey conferred with the judge for a moment, and then said that the colonel's explanation had relieved him of all responsibility. He owed him a humble apology, and he shook his hand. Colonel Carter had done all that a high-bred gentleman could do. The letter was intrusted to the care of Mr. Klutchem's own government, the post-office as now conducted being peculiarly a Yankee institution.

"If Mr. Klutchem's own government, gemmen,"—and he repeated it with a rising voice,—"*if* Mr. Klutchem's own government does not trust him enough to deliver to him a letter in advance of a payment of

two cents, such action, while highly discreditable to Mr. Klutchem, certainly does not relieve that gemman from the responsibility of answerin' Colonel Caarter."

The colonel said the point was well taken, and the judge sustained him.

Yancey looked around with the air of a country lawyer who had tripped up a witness, decorated a corner of the carpet, and continued:—

"My idee, suh, now that I am on the ground, is for me to wait upon the gemman at once, hand him the orig'nal challenge, and demand an immediate answer. That is," turning to Fitz, "unless he is in hidin'."

Fitz replied that it was pretty clear to him that a man could not hide from a challenge he had never received. It was quite evident that Klutchem was detained somewhere.

The colonel coincided, and said in justice to his antagonist that he would have to acquit him of this charge. He did not now believe that Mr. Klutchem had run away.

Fitz, who up to this time had enjoyed every turn in the discussion, and who had listened to Yancey with a face like a stone god, his knees shaking with laughter, now threw another bombshell almost as disastrous as the first.

"Besides, gentlemen, I don't think Mr. Klutchem's remarks were insulting."

The colonel's head rose out of his collar with a jerk, and the forelegs of Yancey's chair struck the floor with a thump. Both sprang to their feet. The judge and I remained quiet. "Not insultin', suh, to call a gemman a—a—Colonel, what did the scoundrel call you?"

"It was mo' his manner," replied the colonel. "He was familiar, suh, and presumin' and offensive."

Yancey broke away again, but Fitz sidetracked him with a gesture, and asked the colonel to repeat Klutchem's exact words.

The colonel gazed at the ceiling a moment, and replied:—

"Mr. Klutchem said that, outside of peanuts and sweet potatoes, all my road would git for freight would be niggers and razor-back hogs."

"Mr. Klutchem was right, Colonel," said Fitz. "Very sensible man. They will form a very large part of our freight. Anything offensive in that remark of Klutchem's, Major Yancey?"

The major conferred with the judge, and said reluctantly that there was not.

"Go on, Colonel," continued Fitz.

"Then, suh, he said he wouldn't trade a yaller dog for enough of our bonds to papah a meetin'-house."

"Did he call you a yaller dog?" said Yancey searchingly, and straightening himself up.

"No."

"Call anybody connected with you a yaller dog?"

"Can't say that he did."

"Call yo' railroad a yaller dog?"

"No, don't think so," said the colonel, now thoroughly confused and adrift.

Yancey consulted with the judge a moment in one corner, and then said gravely:

"Unless some mo' direct insult is stated, Colonel, we must agree with yo' friend Mr. Fitzpatrick, and consider yo' action hasty. Now, if you had pressed the gemman, and he had called *you* a yaller dog or a liar, somethin' might be done. Why didn't you press him?"

"I did, suh. I told him his statements were false and his manners vulgar."

"And he did not talk back?"

"No, suh; on'y laughed."

"Sneeringly, and in a way that sounded like 'Yo' re another?'"

The colonel could not remember that it

was.

Yancey ruminated, and Fitz now took a hand.

"On the contrary, Major Yancey, Mr. Klutchem's laugh was a very jolly laugh; and, under the circumstances, a laugh very creditable to his good nature. You are young and impetuous, but I know my learned friend, Judge Kerfoot, will agree with me"—here Yancey patted his toy balloon complacently, and the judge leaned forward with rapt attention—"when I say that if any apologies are in order they should not come from Mr. Klutchem."

It was delicious to note how easily Fitz fell into the oratorical method of his hearers.

"Here is a man immersed in stocks, and totally ignorant of the boundless resources of your State, who limits the freight of our road to four staples,—peanuts, hogs, sweet potatoes, and niggers. As a further exhibition of his ignorance he estimates the value of a large block of our securities as far below the price set upon a light, tan-coloured canine, a very inexpensive animal; or, as he puts it, and perhaps too coarsely,—a yellow dog. For the expression of these financial opinions in an open office during business hours he is set upon, threatened with expulsion, and finally challenged

to a mortal duel. I ask you, as chivalric Virginians, is this right?"

Yancey was about to answer, when the judge raised his hand impressively.

"The co'te, not being familiar with the practice of this section, can on'y decide the question in acco'dance with the practice of his own county. The language used is not objectionable, either under the law or by the code. The prisoner, Klutchem, is discharged with a reprimand, and the plaintiff, Caarter, leaves the co'te room without a stain on his cha'acter. The co'te will now take a recess."

Fitz listened with great gravity to the decision of the learned judge, bowed to him with the pleased deference of the winning attorney, grasped the colonel's hand, and congratulated him warmly on his acquittal.

Then, locking his arm through Yancey's, he conducted that pugnacious but parched Virginian, together with the overworked judge, out into the street, down a flight of stone steps, and into an underground apartment; from which they all emerged later with that satisfied, cheerful air peculiar to a group of men who have slaked their thirst.

The colonel and I remained behind. He was in no mood for such frivolity.

CHAPTER VIII

A HIGH SENSE OF HONOUR

WHILE the judge's decision had relieved the colonel of all responsibility so far as Yancey and Cartersville were concerned,—and Yancey would be Cartersville when he was back at the tavern stove,—there was one person it had not satisfied, and that was the colonel himself.

He began pacing the floor, recounting for my benefit the various courtesies he had received since he had lived at the North,—not only from the proprietors of the office, but from every one of its frequenters. And yet after all these civilities he had so far forgotten himself as to challenge a friend of his host, a very worthy gentleman, who, although a trifle brusque in his way of putting things, was still an open-hearted man. And all because he differed with him on a matter of finance.

"The mo' I think of it, Major, the mo' I am overwhelmed by my action. It was inconsiderate, suh. It was uncalled for, suh; and I am afraid"—and here he lowered his voice—"it was ill-bred and vulgar. What could those gentlemen who stood by have thought? They have all been so good

to me, Major. I have betrayed their hospitality. I have forgotten my blood, suh. There is certainly an apology due Mr. Klutchem."

At this juncture Fitz returned, followed by Yancey, who was beaming all over, the judge bringing up the rear.

All three listened attentively.

"Who's goin' to apologize?" said Yancey, shifting his thumbs from his armholes to the side pockets of his vest, from which he pinched up some shreds of tobacco.

"I am, suh!" replied the colonel.

"What for, Colonel?" The doctrine was new to Yancey.

"For my own sense of honour, suh!"

"But he never got the challenge."

"That makes no diff'ence, suh. I wrote it." And the colonel threw his head up, and looked Major Yancey straight in the eye.

"But, Colonel, we've got the letter. Klutchem don't know a word about it."

"But I do, Major Yancey; and so do you and Fitz and the jedge and the major here. We all know it. Do you suppose, suh, for one instant, that I am cowardly enough to stab a man in the back this way and give him no chance of defendin' himself? It is monst'ous, suh! Why, suh, it's no better than insultin' a deaf man, and then tryin' to escape because he did not hear you. I tell you, suh, I shall apologize. Fitz, kindly inquire outside if there is any news of Mr. Klutchem."

Fitz opened the door, and sent the inquiry ringing through the office.

"Yes!" came a voice from around the "ticker." "Went to the races two days ago, got soaking wet, and has been laid up ever since at a friend's house with the worst attack of gout he ever had in his life."

The colonel started as if he had been stung, put on his hat, and with a determined air buttoned his coat over his chest. Then, charging Yancey and the judge not to leave the office until he returned, he beckoned Fitz to him, and said:—

"We have not a moment to lose. Get Mr. Klutchem's address, and order a caarriage."

It was the custom with Fitz never to cross the colonel in any one of his sudden whims. Whether this was because he liked to indulge him, or because it gave him an opportunity to study a type of man entirely new to him, the result was always the same,—the colonel had his way. Had the Virginian insisted upon waiting on the offending broker in a palanquin or upon the top of a four-in-hand, Fitz would have found

the vehicle somehow, and have crawled in or on top beside him with as much complacency as if he had spent his whole life with palanquins and coaches, and had had no other interests. So when the order came for the carriage, Fitz winked at me with his left eye, walked to the sidewalk, whistled to a string of cabs, and the next instant we were all three whirling up the crowded street in search of the bed-ridden broker.

The longer the colonel brooded over the situation the more he was satisfied with the idea of the apology. Indeed, before he had turned down the side street leading to the temporary hospital of the suffering man, he had arranged in his mind just where the ceremony would take place, and just how he would frame his opening sentence. He was glad, too, that Klutchem had been discovered so soon—while Yancey and Kerfoot were still in town.

The colonel alighted first, ran up the steps, pulled the bell with the air of a doctor called to an important case, and sent his card to the first floor back.

"Mr. Klutchem says, 'Walk up,'" said the maid.

The broker was in an armchair with his back to the door, only the top of his bald head being visible as we entered. On a stool in front rested a foot of enormous size swathed in bandages. Leaning against his chair were a pair of crutches. He was somewhat startled at the invasion, made as it was in the busiest part of the day.

"What's up? Anybody busted?"

Fitz assured him that the Street was in a mood of the greatest tranquillity; that the visit was purely personal, and made for the express purpose of offering Colonel Carter an opportunity of relieving his mind of a pressure which at the precise moment was greater than he could bear.

"Out with it, old Garden—Colonel," broke out Klutchem, catching himself in time, and apparently greatly relieved that the situation was no worse.

The colonel, who remained standing, bowed courteously, drew himself up with a dress-parade gesture, and recounted slowly and succinctly the incidents of the preceding three days.

When he arrived at the drawing-up of the challenge, Klutchem looked around curiously, gathered in his crutches with his well leg,—prepared for escape or defense,—and remained thus equipped until the colonel reached the secret consultation in the private office and the return of the unstamped letter. Then he toppled his sup-

ports over on the floor, and laughed until the pain in his elephantine foot bent him double.

The colonel paused until Klutchem had recovered himself, and then continued, his face still serene, and still expressive of a purpose so lofty that it excluded every other emotion.

"The return of my challenge unopened, suh, coupled with the broad views of my distinguished friends, Mr. Fitzpatrick and the major,—both personal friends of yo' own, I believe,—and the calmer reflection of my own mind, have convinced me, Mr. Klutchem, that I have been hasty and have done you a wrong; and, suh, rememberin' my blood, I have left the cares of my office for a brief moment to call upon you at once, and tell you so. I regret, suh, that you have not the use of both yo' legs, but I have anticipated that difficulty. My caarriage is outside."

"Don't mention it, Colonel. You never grazed me. If you want to plaster that syndicate all over with Garden Spots, go ahead. I won't say a word. There's my hand."

The colonel never altered a line in his face nor moved a muscle of his body. Mr. Klutchem's hand remained suspended in mid air.

"Yo' action is creditable to yo' heart, suh, but you know, of course, that I can not take yo' hand here. I insulted you in a public office, and in the presence of yo' friends and of mine, some of whom are at this moment awaitin' our return. I feel assured, suh, that under the circumstances you will make an effort, however painful it may be to you, to relieve me from this stain

on my cha'acter. Allow me to offer you my arm, and help you to my caarriage, suh. I will not detain you mo' than an hour."

Klutchem looked at him in perfect astonishment.

"What for?"

The colonel's colour rose.

"That this matter may be settled properly, suh. I insulted you publicly in my office. I wish to apologize in the same way. It is my right, suh."

"But I can't walk. Look at that foot,—big as a hatbox."

"My friends will assist you, suh. I will carry yo' crutches myself. Consider my situation. You surely, as a man of honour, will not refuse me this, Mr. Klutchem?"

The colonel's eyes began to snap, and Fitz edged round to pour oil when the wind freshened. Klutchem's temper was also on the move.

"Get out of this chair with that mush poultice," pointing to his foot, "and have you cart me down to Wall Street to tell me you are sorry you didn't murder me! What do you take me for?"

The colonel's eyes now fairly blazed, and his voice trembled with suppressed anger.

"I did take you, suh, for a gentleman. I find I am mistaken. And you refuse to go, and"—

"Yes!" roared Klutchem, his voice splitting the air like a tomahawk.

"Then, suh, let me tell you right here that if you do not get up now and get into my caarriage, whenever you *can* stand on yo' wuthless legs, I will thresh you so, suh, that you will never get up any mo'."

(To be concluded)



Phil Fogarty

A Tale of the Fighting Onety-Oneth

By HARRY ROLLICKER

[ONE OF THACKERAY'S "NOVELS BY EMINENT HANDS"]

I



HE gabion was ours. After two hours' fighting we were in possession of the

first embrasure, and made ourselves as comfortable as circumstances would admit. Jack Delamere, Tom Delancy, Jerry Blake, the Doctor, and myself sat down under a pontoon, and our servants laid out a hasty supper on a tumbrel. Though Cambacérès had escaped me so provokingly after I cut him down, his spoils were mine; a cold fowl and a Bologna sausage were found in the Marshal's holsters; and in the haversack of a French private who lay a corpse on the glacis, we found a loaf of bread, his three days' ration. Instead of salt, we had gunpowder; and you may be sure, wherever the Doctor was, a flask of good brandy was behind him in his instrument case. We sat down and made a soldier's supper. The Doctor pulled a few of the delicious fruit from the lemon trees growing near (and round which the Carabiniers and the 24th Leger had made a desperate rally), and punch was brewed in Jack Delamere's helmet.

"Faith, it never had so much wit in it before," said the Doctor, as he ladled out the drink. We all roared with laughing, except the guardsman, who was as savage as a Turk at a christening.

"Buvez-en," said old Sawbones to our French prisoner; "ça vous fera du bien, mon vieux coq!" and the Colonel, whose wound had been just dressed, eagerly grasped at the proffered cup, and drained it with a health to the donors.

How strange are the chances of war! But half-an-hour before he and I were engaged in mortal combat, and our prisoner was all but my conqueror. Grappling with

Wm Thackeray.

Cambacérès, whom I knocked from his horse, and was about to despatch, I felt a lunge behind, which luckily was parried by my sabretache; a herculean grasp was at the next instant

at my throat—I was on the ground—my prisoner had escaped, and a gigantic warrior in the uniform of a colonel of the regiment of Artois glaring over me with pointed sword.

"Rends-toi, coquin!" says he.

"Allez au Diable!" said I: "a Fogarty never surrenders."

I thought of my poor mother and my sisters, at the old house in Killaloo—I felt the tip of his blade between my teeth—I breathed a prayer, and shut my eyes—when the tables were turned—the butt-end of Lanty Clancy's musket knocked the sword up and broke the arm that held it.

"Thonamoundiaoul nabochlish," said the French officer, with a curse in the purest Irish. It was lucky I stopped laughing time enough to bid Lanty hold his hand, for the honest fellow would else have brained my gallant adversary. We were the better friends for our combat, as what gallant hearts are not?

The breach was to be stormed at sunset, and like true soldiers we sat down to make the most of our time. The rogue of a Doctor took the liver-wing for his share—we gave the other to our guest, a prisoner; those scoundrels Jack Delamere and Tom Delancy took the legs—and, 'faith, poor I was put off with the Pope's nose and a bit of the back.

"How d'ye like his Holiness's *jayture*?" said Jerry Blake.

"Anyhow, you'll have a *merry thought*," cried the incorrigible Doctor, and all the party shrieked at the witticism.

"De mortuis nil nisi bonum," said Jack, holding up the drumstick clean.

"Faith, there's not enough of it to make us *chicken-hearted*, anyhow," said I. "Come, boys, let's have a song."

"Here goes," said Tom Delancy, and sung the following lyric, of his own composition:—

"Dear Jack, this white mug that with Guinness I
fill,
And drink to the health of sweet Nan of the Hill,
Was once Tommy Tossput's, as jovial a sot
As e'er drew a spigot, or drain'd a full pot—
In drinking all round 'twas his joy to surpass,
And with all merry tipplers he swigged off his
glass.

One morning in summer, while seated so snug,
In the porch of his garden, discussing his jug,
Stern Death, on a sudden, to Tom did appear,
And said, 'Honest Thomas, come take your last
bier;'

We kneaded his clay in the shape of this can,
From which let us drink to the health of my Nan."

"Psha!" said the Doctor, "I've heard that song before; here's a new one for you, boys!" and Sawbones began, in a rich Corkagian voice—

"You've all heard of Larry O'Toole,
Of the beautiful town of Drumgoole;
He had but one eye
To ogle ye by—
Oh, murder, but that was a jew'!!
A fool
He made of de girls, dis O'Toole.

'Twas he was the boy didn't fail,
That tuck down pataties and mail;
He never would shrink
From any strong dhrink,
Was it whisky or Drogheda ale;
I'm bail
This Larry would swallow a pail.

Oh, many a night at the bowl,
With Larry I've sot cheek by jowl;
He's gone to his rest,
Where there's dhrink of the best,
And so let us give his old sow!
A howl,
For 'twas he made the noggin to rowl."

I observed the French Colonel's eye glistened as he heard these well-known accents of his country; but we were too well bred to pretend to remark his emotion.

The sun was setting behind the mountains as our songs were finished, and each began to look out with some anxiety for the preconcerted signal, the rocket from Sir Hussey Vivian's quarters, which was to announce the recommencement of hostilities. It came just as the moon rose in her silver splendour, and ere the rocket-stick fell quivering to the earth at the feet of General Picton and Sir Lowry Cole, who were at their posts at the head of the storming-parties, nine hundred and ninety-nine guns in position

opened their fire from our batteries, which were answered by a tremendous cannonade from the fort.

"Who's going to dance?" said the Doctor: "the ball's begun. Hal there goes poor Jack Delamere's head off! The ball comes a soft one, anyhow. Come here, Tim, till I mend your leg. Your wife need only knit half as many stockings next year, Doolan, my boy. Faix! there goes a big one had well-nigh stopped my talking: bedad! it has snuffed the feather off my cocked hat!"

In this way, with eighty-four-pounders roaring over us like hail, the undaunted little Doctor pursued his jokes and his duty. That he had a feeling heart, all who served with him knew, and none more so than Philip Fogarty, the humble writer of this tale of war.

Our embrasure was luckily bomb-proof, and the detachment of the Onety-oneth under my orders suffered comparatively little. "Be cool, boys," I said; "it will be hot enough work for you ere long."

The honest fellows answered with an Irish cheer. I saw that it affected our prisoner.

"Countryman!" said I, "I know you; but an Irishman was never a traitor."

"Taisez-vous!" said he, putting his finger to his lip. "C'est la fortune de la guerre: if ever you come to Paris, ask for the Marquis d' O'Mahony, and I may render you the hospitality which your tyrannous laws prevent me from exercising in the ancestral halls of my own race."

I shook him warmly by the hand as a tear bedimmed his eye. It was, then, the celebrated colonel of the Irish Brigade, created a Marquis by Napoleon on the field of Austerlitz!

"Marquis," said I, "the country which disowns you is proud of you; but—ha! here, if I mistake not, comes our signal to advance." And in fact Captain Vandeleur, riding up through the shower of shot, asked for the commander of the detachment, and bade me hold myself in readiness to move as soon as the flank companies of the Ninety-ninth, and Sixty-sixth, and the Grenadier Brigade of the German Legion began to advance up the échelon. The devoted band soon arrived; Jack Bowser heading the Ninety-ninth (when was he away and a storming-party to the fore?), and the gallant Potztausend, with his Hanoverian veterans.

The second rocket flew up.

"Forward, Onety-oneth!" cried I, in a voice of thunder. "Killaloo boys, follow

your captain!" and with a shrill hurray, that sounded above the tremendous fire from the fort, we sprung up the steep; Bowser with the brave Ninety-ninth, and the bold Potztausend, keeping well up with us. We passed the demilune, we passed the culverin, bayoneting the artillerymen at their guns; we advanced across the two tremendous demilunes which flank the counterscarp, and prepared for the final spring upon the citadel. Soult I could see quite pale on the wall; and the scoundrel Cambacérés, who had been so nearly my prisoner that day, trembled as he cheered his men. "On, boys, on!" I hoarsely exclaimed. "Hurroo!" said the fighting Onety-oneth.

But there was a movement among the enemy. An officer, glittering with orders, and another in a grey coat and a cocked hat, came to the wall, and I recognized the Emperor Napoleon and the famous Joachim Murat.

"We are hardly pressed, methinks," Napoleon said sternly. "I must exercise my old trade as an artilleryman;" and Murat loaded, and the Emperor pointed the only hundred-and-twenty-four-pounder that had not been silenced by our fire.

"Hurra, Killaloo boys!" shouted I. The next moment a sensation of numbness and death seized me, and I lay like a corpse upon the rampart.

II

"HUSH!" said a voice, which I recognized to be that of the Marquis d' O'Mahony. "Heaven be praised, reason has returned to you. For six weeks those are the only sane words I have heard from you."

"Faix, and 'tis thrue for you, Colonel dear," cried another voice, with which I was even more familiar: 'twas that of my honest and gallant Lanty Clancy, who was blubbering at my bedside overjoyed at his master's recovery.

"O musha, Master Phil agra! but this will be the great day intirely, when I send off the news, which I would, barrin' I can't write, to the lady your mother and your sisters at Castle Fogarty; and 'tis his Riv'rence Father Luke will jump for joy thin, when he reads the letther! Six weeks ravin' and roarin' as bould as a lion, and as mad as Mick Malony's pig, that mistuck Mick's wig for a cabbage, and died of atin' it!"

"And have I then lost my senses?" I exclaimed feebly.

"Sure, didn't ye call me your beautiful Donna Anna only yesterday, and catch hould of me whiskers as if they were the Signora's jet-black ringlets?" Lanty cried.

At this moment, and blushing deeply, the most beautiful young creature I ever set my eyes upon rose from a chair at the foot of the bed, and sailed out of the room.

"Confusion, you blundering rogue," I cried; "who is that lovely lady whom you frightened away by your impertinence? Donna Anna? Where am I?"

"You are in good hands, Philip," said the Colonel; "you are at my house in the Place Vendôme, at Paris, of which I am the military Governor. You and Lanty were knocked down by the wind of the cannon-ball at Burgos. Do not be ashamed: 'twas the Emperor pointed the gun;" and the Colonel took off his hat as he mentioned the name darling to France. "When our troops returned from the sally in which your gallant storming-party was driven back, you were found on the glacis, and I had you brought into the City. Your reason had left you, however, when you returned to life; but, unwilling to desert the son of my old friend, Philip Fogarty, who saved my life in '98, I brought you in my carriage to Paris."

"And many's the time you tried to jump out of the windy, Masther Phil," said Clancy.

"Brought you to Paris," resumed the Colonel, smiling; "where by the *soins* of my friends Broussais, Esquirol, and Baron Larrey, you have been restored to health, thank Heaven!"

"And that lovely angel who quitted the apartment?" I cried.

"That lovely angel is the Lady Blanche Sarsfield, my ward, a descendant of the gallant Lucan, and who may be, when she chooses, Madame la Maréchale de Cambacérés, Duchess of Illyria."

"Why did you deliver the ruffian when he was in my grasp?" I cried.

"Why did Lanty deliver you when in mine?" the Colonel replied. "C'est la fortune de la guerre, mon garçon; but calm yourself, and take this potion which Blanche has prepared for you."

I drank the *tisane* eagerly when I heard whose fair hands had compounded it, and its effects were speedily beneficial to me, for I sank into a cool and refreshing slumber.

From that day I began to mend rapidly, with all the elasticity of youth's happy time. Blanche—the enchanting Blanche—ministered henceforth to me, for I would take no

medicine but from her lily hand. And what were the effects? 'Faith, ere a month was past, the patient was over head and ears in love with the doctor; and as for Baron Larrey, and Broussais, and Esquirol, they were sent to the right-about. In a short time I was in a situation to do justice to the *gigot aux navets*, the *boeuf aux cornichons*, and the other delicious *entremets* of the Marquis's board, with an appetite that astonished some of the Frenchmen who frequented it.

"Wait till he's quite well, miss," said Lanty, who waited always behind me. "'Faith! when he's in health, I'd back him to ate a cow, barrin' the horns and teel." I sent a decanter at the rogue's head, by way of answer to his impertinence.

Although the disgusting Cambacérès did his best to have my parole withdrawn from me, and to cause me to be sent to the English *dépôt* of prisoners at Verdun, the Marquis's interest with the Emperor prevailed, and I was allowed to remain at Paris, the happiest of prisoners, at the Colonel's hotel at the Place Vendôme. I here had the opportunity (an opportunity not lost, I flatter myself, on a young fellow with the accomplishments of Philip Fogarty, Esq.) of mixing with the *élite* of French society, and meeting with many of the great, the beautiful, and the brave. Talleyrand was a frequent guest of the Marquis's. His *bon-mots* used to keep the table in a roar. Ney frequently took his chop with us; Murat, when in town, constantly dropt in for a cup of tea and friendly round game. Alas! who would have thought those two gallant heads would be so soon laid low? My wife has a pair of earrings which the latter, who always wore them, presented to her—but we are advancing matters. Anybody could see "avec un demi-oil," as the Prince of Benevento remarked, how affairs went between me and Blanche; but though she loathed him for his cruelties and the odiousness of his person, the brutal Cambacérès still pursued his designs upon her.

I recollect it was on St. Patrick's Day. My lovely friend had procured, from the gardens of the Empress Josephine, at Malmaison (whom we loved a thousand times more than her Austrian successor, a sandy-haired woman, between ourselves, with an odious squint), a quantity of shamrock wherewith to garnish the hotel, and all the Irish in Paris were invited to the national festival.

I and Prince Talleyrand danced a double hornpipe with Pauline Bonaparte and Ma-

dame de Staël; Marshall Soult went down a couple of sets with Madame Recamier; and Robespierre's widow—an excellent, gentle creature, quite unlike her husband—stood up with the Austrian ambassador. Besides, the famous artists Baron Gros, David, and Nicholas Poussin, and Canova, who was in town making a statue of the Emperor for Leo X., and, in a word, all the celebrities of Paris—as my gifted country woman, the Wild Irish Girl, calls them—were assembled in the Marquis's elegant receiving-rooms.

At last a great outcry was raised for "La Gigue Irlandaise! La Gigue Irlandaise!" a dance which had made a *fureur* amongst the Parisians ever since the lovely Blanche Sarsfield had danced it. She stepped forward and took me for a partner, and amidst the bravos of the crowd, in which stood Ney, Murat, Lannes, the Prince of Wagram, and the Austrian ambassador, we showed to the *beau monde* of the French capital, I flatter myself, a not unfavourable specimen of the dance of our country.

As I was cutting the double shuffle, and toe-and-heeling it in the "rail" style, Blanche danced up to me, smiling, and said, "Be on your guard; I see Cambacérès talking to Fouché, the Duke of Otranto, about us; and when Otranto turns his eyes upon a man, they bode him no good."

"Cambacérès is jealous," said I. "I have it," says she; "I'll make him dance a turn with me." So, presently, as the music was going like mad all this time, I pretended fatigue from my late wounds, and sat down. The lovely Blanche went up smiling, and brought out Cambacérès as a second partner.

The Marshal is a lusty man, who makes desperate efforts to give himself a waist, and the effect of the exercise upon him was speedily visible. He puffed and snorted like a walrus, drops trickled down his purple face, while my lovely mischief of a Blanche went on dancing at treble quick, till she fairly danced him down.

"Who'll take the fure with me?" said the charming girl, animated by the sport.

"Faix, den, 'tis I, Lanty Clancy!" cried my rascal, who had been mad with excitement at the scene; and, stepping in with a whoop and a hurroo, he began to dance with such rapidity as made all present stare.

As the couple were footing it, there was a noise as of a rapid cavalcade traversing the Place Vendôme, and stopping at the Marquis's door. A crowd appeared to mount the stair; the great doors of the

reception-room were flung open, and two pages announced their Majesties the Emperor and the Empress. So engaged were Lanty and Blanche, that they never heard the tumult occasioned by the august approach.

It was indeed the Emperor, who, returning from the Théâtre Français, and seeing the Marquis's windows lighted up, proposed to the Empress to drop in on the party. He made signs to the musicians to continue: and the conqueror of Marengo and Friedland watched with interest the simple evolutions of two happy Irish people. Even the Empress smiled; and, seeing this, all the courtiers, including Naples and Talleyrand, were delighted.

"Is not this a great day for Ireland?" said the Marquis, with a tear trickling down his noble face. "O Ireland! O my country! But no more of that. Go up, Phil, you divvie, and offer her Majesty the choice of punch or negus."

Among the young fellows with whom I was most intimate in Paris was Eugène Beauharnais, the son of the ill-used and unhappy Josephine by her former marriage with a French gentleman of good family. Having a smack of the old blood in him, Eugène's manners were much more refined than those of the new-fangled dignitaries of the Emperor's Court, where (for my knife and fork were regularly laid at the Tuileries) I have seen my poor friend Murat repeatedly mistake a fork for a toothpick, and the gallant Massena devour peas by means of his knife, in a way more innocent than graceful. Talleyrand, Eugène, and I used often to laugh at these eccentricities of our brave friends; who certainly did not shine in the drawing-room, however brilliant they were on the field of battle. The Emperor always asked me to take wine with him, and was full of kindness and attention.

"I like Eugène," he would say, pinching my ears confidentially, as his way was—"I like Eugène to keep company with such young fellows as you: you have manners; you have principles; my rogues from the camp have none. And I like you, Philip, my boy," he added, "for being so attentive to my poor wife—the Empress Josephine, I mean." All these honours made my friends at the Marquis's very proud, and my enemies at Court *crever* with envy. Among these, the atrocious Cambacérés was not the least active and venomous.

The cause of the many attentions which were paid to me, and which, like a vain

coxcomb, I had chosen to attribute to my own personal amiability, soon was apparent. Having formed a good opinion of my gallantry from my conduct in various actions and forlorn hopes during the war, the Emperor was most anxious to attach me to his service. The Grand Cross of St. Louis, the title of Count, the command of a crack cavalry regiment, the 14me Chevaux Marins, were the bribes that were actually offered to me; and must I say it? Blanche, the lovely, the perfidious Blanche, was one of the agents employed to tempt me to commit this act of treason.

"Object to enter a foreign service!" she said, in reply to my refusal. "It is you, Philip, who are in a foreign service. The Irish nation is in exile, and in the territories of its French allies. Irish traitors are not here; they march alone under the accursed flag of the Saxon, whom the great Napoleon would have swept from the face of the earth, but for the fatal valour of Irish mercenaries! Accept this offer, and my heart, my hand, my all are yours. Refuse it, Philip, and we part."

"To wed the abominable Cambacérés!" I cried, stung with rage. "To wear a duchess's coronet, Blanche! Ha, ha! Mushrooms, instead of strawberry-leaves, should decorate the brows of the upstart French nobility. I shall withdraw my parole. I demand to be sent to prison—to be exchanged—to die—anything rather than be a traitor, and the tool of a traitress!" Taking up my hat, I left the room in a fury; and flinging open the door tumbled over Cambacérés, who was listening at the key-hole, and must have overheard every word of our conversation.

We tumbled over each other, as Blanche was shrieking with laughter at our mutual discomfiture. Her scorn only made me more mad; and, having spurs on, I began digging them into Cambacérés's fat sides as we rolled on the carpet, until the Marshal howled with rage and anger.

"This insult must be avenged with blood!" roared the Duke of Illyria.

"I have already drawn it," says I, "with my spurs."

"Malheur et malédiction!" roared the Marshal.

"Hadn't you better settle your wig," says I, offering it to him on the tip of my cane, "and we'll arrange time and place when you have put your jasey in order." I shall never forget the look of revenge which he cast at me, as I was thus turning him into ridicule before his mistress.

"Lady Blanche," I continued bitterly, "as you look to share the Duke's coronet, hadn't you better see to his wig?" and so saying, I cocked my hat, and walked out of the Marquis's place, whistling "Garry-owen."

I knew my man would not be long in following me, and waited for him in the Place Vendôme, where I luckily met Eugène too, who was looking at the picture-shop in the corner. I explained to him my affair in a twinkling. He at once agreed to go with me to the ground, and commended me, rather than otherwise, for refusing the offer which had been made to me. "I knew it would be so," he said kindly; "I told my father you wouldn't. A man with the blood of the Fogarties, Phil, my boy, doesn't wheel about like those fellows of yesterday." Som, when Cambacérès came out, which he did presently, with a more furious air than before, I handed him at once over to Eugène, who begged him to name a friend, and an early hour for the meeting to take place.

"Can you make it before eleven, Phil?" said Beauharnais. "The Emperor reviews the troops in the Bois de Boulogne at that hour, and we might fight there handy before the review."

"Done!" said I. "I want of all things to see the newly-arrived Saxon cavalry manoeuvre": on which Cambacérès, giving me a look, as much as to say, "See sights! Watch cavalry manoeuvres! Make your soul, and take measure for a coffin, my boy!" walked away, naming our mutual acquaintance, Marshal Ney, to Eugène, as his second in the business.

I had purchased from Murat a very fine Irish horse, Bugaboo, out of Smithereens, by Fadladeen, which ran into the French ranks at Salamanca, with poor Jack Clonakilty, of the 13th, dead, on the top of him. Bugaboo was much too ugly an animal for the King of Naples, who, though a showy horseman, was a bad rider across country; and I got the horse for a song. A wickeder and uglier brute never wore pigskin; and I never put my leg over such a timber-jumper in my life. I rode the horse down to the Bois de Boulogne on the morning that the affair with Cambacérès was to come off, and Lanty held him as I went in, "sure to win," as they say in the ring.

Cambacérès was known to be the best shot in the French army; but I, who am a pretty good hand at a snipe, thought a man was bigger; and that I could wing him if I had a mind. As soon as Ney gave the

word, we both fired: I felt a whizz past my left ear, and putting up my hand there, found a large piece of my whiskers gone; whereas at the same moment, and shrieking a horrible malediction, my adversary reeled and fell.

"Mon Dieu, il est mort!" cried Ney.

"Pas du tout," said Beauharnais. "Écoute; il jure toujours."

And such, indeed, was the fact: the supposed dead man lay on the ground cursing most frightfully. We went up to him: he was blind with the loss of blood, and my ball had carried off the bridge of his nose. He recovered; but he was always called the Prince of Ponterotto in the French army afterwards. The surgeon in attendance having taken charge of this unfortunate warrior, we rode off to the review, where Ney and Eugène were on duty at the head of their respective divisions; and where, by the way, Cambacérès, as the French say, "se faisait désirer."

It was arranged that Cambacérès's division of six battalions and nine-and-twenty squadrons should execute a *ricochet* movement, supported by artillery in the intervals, and converging by different *épaulements* on the light infantry, that formed, as usual, the centre of the line. It was by this famous manoeuvre that at Arcola, at Montenotte, at Friedland, and subsequently at Mazagram, Suwaroff, Prince Charles, and General Castanos were defeated with such victorious slaughter; but it is a movement which, I need not tell every military man, requires the greatest delicacy of execution, and which, if it fails, plunges an army into confusion.

"Where is the Duke of Illyria?" Napoleon asked. "At the head of his division, no doubt," said Murat: at which Eugène, giving me an arch look, put his hand to his nose, and caused me almost to fall off my horse with laughter. Napoleon looked sternly at me; but at this moment the troops getting in motion, the celebrated manoeuvre began, and his Majesty's attention was taken off from my impudence.

Milhaud's Dragoons, their bands playing "Vive Henri Quatre," their cuirasses gleaming in the sunshine, moved upon their own centre from the left flank in the most brilliant order, while the Carbineers of Foy, and the Grenadiers of the Guard under Drouet d'Erion, executed a carbolade on the right, with the precision which became those veteran troops; but the Chasseurs of the young guard, marching by twos instead of threes, bore consequently upon the

Bavarian Uhlans (an ill-disciplined and ill-affected body), and these, falling back in disorder, became entangled with the artillery and the left centre of the line, and in one instant thirty thousand men were in inextricable confusion.

"Clubbed, by Jabers!" roared out Lanty Clancy. "I wish we could show 'em the Fighting Onety-oneth, Captain darling."

"Silence, fellow!" I exclaimed. I never saw the face of man express passion so vividly as now did the livid countenance of Napoleon. He tore off General Milhaud's epaulettes, which he flung into Foy's face. He glared about him wildly, like a demon, and shouted hoarsely for the Duke of Illyria. "He is wounded, sire," said General Foy, wiping a tear from his eye, which was blackened by the force of the blow; "he was wounded an hour since in a duel, sire, by a young English prisoner, Monsieur de Fogarty."

"Wounded! a Marshal of France wounded! Where is the Englishman? Bring him out, and let a file of grenadiers——"

"Sire!" interposed Eugène.

"Let him be shot!" shrieked the Emperor, shaking his spy-glass at me with the fury of a fiend.

This was too much. "Here goes," said I, and rode slap at him.

There was a shriek of terror from the whole of the French army, and I should think at least forty thousand guns were leveled at me in an instant. But as the muskets were not loaded, and the cannon had only wadding in them, these facts, I presume, saved the life of Phil Fogarty from this discharge.

Knowing my horse, I put him at the Emperor's head, and Bugaboo went at it like a shot. He was riding his famous white Arab, and turned quite pale as I came up and went over the horse and the Emperor, scarcely brushing the cockade which he wore.

"Bravo!" said Murat, bursting into enthusiasm at the leap.

"Cut him down!" said Siéyès, once an Abbé, but now a gigantic Cuirassier; and he made a pass at me with his sword. But he little knew an Irishman on an Irish horse. Bugaboo cleared Siéyès, and fetched the monster a slap with his near hind hoof which sent him reeling from his saddle—and away I went, with an army of a hundred and seventy-three thousand eight hundred men at my heels. . . .



Amor Triumphans

I

By ARTHUR SYMONS

ALL that remains for me,
In this world, after this,
Is, but to take a kiss
For what a kiss should be;

To stake one's heart to win,
Yet have no heart to lose:
Now I am free to choose,
Now, let the game begin!

If my hand shakes and swerves
A little as I play,
Well, such a yesterday
Was trying for one's nerves.

But I am wary, see!
I know the game at last.
I know the past is past,
And what remains for me:

To play a lighter stake,
Nor lay one's heart above,
And to have done with love
For ever, for your sake.

The Distracted Preacher

By THOMAS HARDY

VI. THE GREAT SEARCH AT NETHER-MOYNTON

STOCKDALE was so excited by the events of the evening, and the dilemma that he was placed in between conscience and love, that he did not sleep, or even doze, but remained as broadly awake as at noonday. As soon as the grey light began to touch ever so faintly the whiter objects in his bedroom he arose, dressed himself, and went downstairs into the road.

The village was already astir. Several of the carriers had heard the well-known tramp of Latimer's horse while they were undressing in the dark that night, and had already communicated with each other and Owlett on the subject. The only doubt seemed to be about the safety of those tubs which had been left under the church gallery-stairs, and after a short discussion at the corner of the mill, it was agreed that these should be removed before it got lighter, and hidden in the middle of a double hedge bordering the adjoining field. However, before anything could be carried into effect, the footsteps of many men were heard coming down the lane from the highway.

"Damn it, here they be," said Owlett, who, having already drawn the hatch and started his mill for the day, stood stolidly at the mill-door covered with flour, as if the interest of his whole soul was bound up in the shaking walls around him.

The two or three with whom he had been talking dispersed to their usual work, and when the excise officers, and the formidable body of men they had hired, reached the village cross, between the mill and Mrs. Newberry's house, the village wore the natural aspect of a place beginning its morning labours.

"Now," said Latimer to his associates, who numbered thirteen men in all, "what I know is that the things are somewhere in this here place. We have got the day before us, and 'tis hard if we can't light upon 'em and get 'em to Budmouth Custom-house before night. First we will try the fuel-

houses, and then we'll work our way into the chimneys, and then to the ricks and stables, and so creep round. You have nothing but your noses to guide ye, mind, so use 'em to-day if you never did in your lives before."

Then the search began. Owlett, during the early part, watched from his mill window, Lizzy from the door of her house, with the greatest self-possession. A farmer down below, who also had a share in the run, rode about with one eye on his fields and the other on Latimer and his myrmidons, prepared to put them off the scent if he should be asked a question. Stockdale, who was no smuggler at all, felt more anxiety than the worst of them, and went about his studies with a heavy heart, coming frequently to the door to ask Lizzy some question or other on the consequences to her of the tubs being found.

"The consequences," she said quietly, "are simply that I shall lose 'em. As I have none in the house or garden, they can't touch me personally."

"But you have some in the orchard?"

"Owlett rents that of me, and he lends it to others. So it will be hard to say who put any tubs there if they should be found."

There was never such a tremendous sniffing known as that which took place in Nether-Moynton parish and its vicinity this day. All was done methodically, and mostly on hands and knees. At different hours of the day they had different plans. From daybreak to breakfast-time the officers used their sense of smell in a direct and straightforward manner only, pausing nowhere but at such places as the tubs might be supposed to be secreted in at that very moment, pending their removal on the following night. Among the places tested and examined were:—

Hollow trees	Cupboards	Culverts
Potato-graves	Clock-cases	Hedgerows
Fuel-houses	Chimney-flues	Faggot-ricks
Bedrooms	Rainwater-butts	Haystacks
Apple-lofts	Pig-sties	Coppers and ovens

After breakfast they recommenced with renewed vigour, taking a new line; that is to say, directing their attention to clothes that

might be supposed to have come in contact with the tubs in their removal from the shore, such garments being usually tainted with the spirit, owing to its oozing between the staves. They now sniffed at—

Smock-frocks	Smiths' and shoemakers'
Old shirts and waistcoats	aprons
Coats and hats	Knee-naps and hedging-
Breeches and leggings	gloves
Women's shawls and	Tarpaulins
gowns	Market-cloaks
Scarecrows	

And as soon as the mid-day meal was over, they pushed their search into places where the spirits might have been thrown away in alarm:—

Horse-ponds	Mixens	Sinks in yards
Stable-drains	Wet ditches	Road-scrappings, and
Cinder-heaps	Cesspools	Back-door gutters.

But still these indefatigable excisemen discovered nothing more than the original tell-tale smell in the road opposite Lizzy's house, which even yet had not passed off.

"I'll tell ye what it is, men," said Latimer, about three o'clock in the afternoon, "we must begin over again. Find them tubs I will."

The men, who had been hired for the day, looked at their hands and knees, muddy with creeping on all fours so frequently, and rubbed their noses, as if they had almost had enough of it; for the quantity of bad air which had passed into each one's nostril had rendered it nearly as insensible as a flue. However, after a moment's hesitation, they prepared to start anew, except three, whose power of smell had quite succumbed under the excessive wear and tear of the day.

By this time not a male villager was to be seen in the parish. Owlett was not at his mill, the farmers were not in their fields, the parson was not in his garden, the smith had left his forge, and the wheelwright's shop was silent.

"Where the divil are the folk gone?" said Latimer, waking up to the fact of their absence, and looking round. "I'll have 'em up for this! Why don't they come and help us? There's not a man about the place but the Methodist parson, and he's an old woman. I demand assistance in the king's name!"

"We must find the jeneral public afore we can demand that," said his lieutenant.

"Well, well, we shall do better without 'em," said Latimer, who changed his moods at a moment's notice. "But there's great cause of suspicion in this silence and this keeping out of sight, and I'll bear it in mind.

Now we will go across to Owlett's orchard, and see what we can find there."

Stockdale, who heard this discussion from the garden gate, over which he had been leaning, was rather alarmed, and thought it a mistake of the villagers to keep so completely out of the way. He himself, like the excisemen, had been wondering for the last half-hour what could have become of them. Some labourers were of necessity engaged in distant fields, but the master-workmen should have been at home; though one and all, after just showing themselves at their shops, had apparently gone off for the day. He went in to Lizzy, who sat at a back window sewing, and said, "Lizzy, where are the men?"

Lizzy laughed. "Where they mostly are when they're run so hard as this." She cast her eyes to heaven. "Up there," she said.

Stockdale looked up. "What—on the top of the church tower?" he asked, seeing the direction of her glance.

"Yes."

"Well, I expect they will soon have to come down," said he gravely. "I have been listening to the officers, and they are going to search the orchard over again, and then every nook in the church."

Lizzy looked alarmed for the first time. "Will you go and tell our folk?" she said. "They ought to be let know." Seeing his conscience struggling within him like a boiling pot, she added, "No, never mind, I'll go myself."

She went out, descended the garden, and climbed over the churchyard wall at the same time that the preventive men were ascending the road to the orchard. Stockdale could do no less than follow her. By the time that she reached the tower entrance he was at her side, and they entered together.

Nether-Moynton church-tower was, as in many villages, without a turret, and the only way to the top was by going up to the singers' gallery, and thence ascending by a ladder to a square trap-door in the floor of the bell-loft, above which a permanent ladder was fixed, passing through the bells to a hole in the roof. When Lizzy and Stockdale reached the gallery and looked up, nothing but the trap-door and the five holes for the bell-ropes appeared. The ladder was gone.

"There's no getting up," said Stockdale.

"O yes, there is," said she. "There's an eye looking at us at this moment through a knot-hole in that trap-door."

And as she spoke the trap opened, and the dark line of the ladder was seen descending

against the white-washed wall. When it touched the bottom Lizzy dragged it to its place, and said, "If you'll go up, I'll follow."

The young man ascended, and presently found himself among consecrated bells for the first time in his life, non-conformity having been in the Stockdale blood for some generations. He eyed them uneasily, and looked round for Lizzy. Owlett stood here, holding the top of the ladder.

"What, be you really one of us?" said the miller.

"It seems so," said Stockdale sadly.

"He's not," said Lizzy, who overheard.

"He's neither for nor against us. He'll do us no harm."

She stepped up beside them, and then they went on to the next stage, which, when they had clambered over the dusty bell-carriages, was of easy ascent, leading toward the hole through which the pale sky appeared, and into the open air. Owlett remained behind for a moment, to pull up the lower ladder.

"Keep down your heads," said a voice, as soon as they set foot on the flat.

Stockdale here beheld all the missing parishioners, lying on their stomachs on the tower roof, except a few who, elevated on their hands and knees, were peeping through the embrasures of the parapet. Stockdale did the same, and saw the village lying like a map below him, over which moved the figures of the excisemen, each foreshortened to a crab-like object, the crown of his hat forming a circular disc in the center of him. Some of the men had turned their heads when the young preacher's figure arose among them.

"What, Mr. Stockdale?" said Matt Grey, in a tone of surprise.

"I'd as lief that it hadn't been," said Jim Clarke. "If the pa'son should see him a trespassing here in his tower, 'twould be none the better for we, seeing how 'a do hate chapel-members. He'd never buy a tub of us again, and he's as good a customer as we have got this side o' Warm'll."

"Where is the pa'son?" said Lizzy.

"In his house, to be sure, that he mid see nothing of what's going on—where all good folks ought to be, and this young man likewise."

"Well, he has brought some news," said Lizzy. "They are going to search the orchet and church; can we do anything if they should find?"

"Yes," said her cousin Owlett. "That's what we've been talking o', and we have settled our line. Well, be dazed!"

The exclamation was caused by his perceiving that some of the searchers, having got into the orchard, and begun stooping and creeping hither and thither, were pausing in the middle, where a tree smaller than the rest was growing. They drew closer, and bent lower than ever upon the ground.

"O, my tubs!" said Lizzy faintly, as she peered through the parapet at them.

"They have got 'em, 'a b'lieve," said Owlett.

The interest in the movements of the officers was so keen that not a single eye was looking in any other direction; but at that moment a shout from the church beneath them attracted the attention of the smugglers, as it did also of the party in the orchard, who sprang to their feet and went toward the churchyard wall. At the same time those of the Government men who had entered the church unperceived by the smugglers cried aloud, "Here be some of 'em at last."

The smugglers remained in a black silence, uncertain whether "some of 'em" meant tubs or men; but again peeping cautiously over the edge of the tower they learnt that tubs were the things descried; and soon these fated articles were brought one by one into the middle of the churchyard from their hiding-place under the gallery-stairs.

"They are going to put 'em on Hinton's vault till they find the rest!" said Lizzy hopelessly. The excisemen had, in fact, begun to pile up the tubs on a large stone slab which was fixed there; and when all were brought out from the tower, two or three of the men were left standing by them, the rest of the party again proceeding to the orchard.

The interest of the smugglers in the next maneuvers of their enemies became painfully intense. Only about thirty tubs had been secreted in the lumber of the tower, but seventy were hidden in the orchard, making up all that they had brought ashore as yet, the remainder of the cargo having been tied to a sinker and dropped overboard for another night's operations. The excisemen, having re-entered the orchard, acted as if they were positive that here lay hidden the rest of the tubs, which they were determined to find before nightfall. They spread themselves out round the field, and advancing on all fours as before, went anew round every apple-tree in the enclosure. The young tree in the middle again led them to pause, and at length the whole company gathered there in a way which

signified that a second chain of reasoning had led to the same results as the first.

When they had examined the sod hereabouts for some minutes, one of the men rose, ran to a disused porch of the church where tools were kept, and returned with the sexton's pickaxe and shovel, with which they set to work.

"Are they really buried there?" said the minister, for the grass was so green and uninjured that it was difficult to believe it had been disturbed. The smugglers were too interested to reply, and presently they saw, to their chagrin, the officers stand several on each side of the tree; and, stooping and applying their hands to the soil, they bodily lifted the tree and the turf around it. The apple-tree now showed itself to be growing in a shallow box, with handles for lifting at each of the four sides. Under the site of the tree a square hole was revealed, and an exciseman went and looked down.

"It is all up now," said Owlett quietly. "And now all of ye get down before they notice we are here; and be ready for our next move. I had better bide here till dark, or they may take me on suspicion, as 'tis on my ground. I'll be with ye as soon as daylight begins to pink in."

"And I?" said Lizzy.

"You please look to the linch-pins and screws; then go indoors and know nothing at all. The chaps will do the rest."

The ladder was replaced, and all but Owlett descended, the men passing off one by one at the back of the church, and vanishing on their respective errands. Lizzy walked boldly along the street, followed closely by the minister.

"You are going indoors, Mrs. Newberry?" he said.

She knew from the words "Mrs. Newberry" that the division between them had widened yet another degree.

"I am not going home," she said. "I have a little thing to do before I go in. Martha Sarah will get your tea."

"O, I don't mean on that account," said Stockdale. "What *can* you have to do further in this unhallowed affair?"

"Only a little," she said.

"What is that? I'll go with you."

"No, I shall go by myself. Will you please go indoors? I shall be there in less than an hour."

"You are not going to run any danger, Lizzy?" said the young man, his tenderness reasserting itself.

"None whatever—worth mentioning,"

answered she, and went down towards the Cross.

Stockdale entered the garden gate, and stood behind it looking on. The excisemen were still busy in the orchard, and at last he was tempted to enter, and watch their proceedings. When he came closer he found that the secret cellar, of whose existence he had been totally unaware, was formed by timbers placed across from side to side about a foot under the ground, and grassed over.

The excisemen looked up at Stockdale's fair and downy countenance, and evidently thinking him above suspicion, went on with their work again. As soon as all the tubs were taken out, they began tearing up the turf, pulling out the timbers, and breaking in the sides, till the cellar was wholly dismantled and shapeless, the apple-tree lying with its roots high to the air. But the hole, which had in its time held so much contraband merchandise, was never completely filled up, either then or afterwards, a depression in the greensward marking the spot to this day.

VII. THE WALK TO WARM'ELL CROSS AND AFTERWARDS

As the goods had all to be carried to Budmouth that night, the excisemen's next object was to find horses and carts for the journey, and they went about the village for that purpose. Latimer strode hither and thither with a lump of chalk in his hand, marking broad-arrows so vigorously on every vehicle and set of harness that he came across, that it seemed as if he would chalk broad-arrows on the very hedges and roads. The owner of every conveyance so marked was bound to give it up for Government purposes. Stockdale, who had had enough of the scene, turned indoors thoughtful and depressed. Lizzy was already there, having come in at the back, though she had not yet taken off her bonnet. She looked tired, and her mood was not much brighter than his own. They had but little to say to each other; and the minister went away and attempted to read; but at this he could not succeed, and he shook the little bell for tea.

Lizzy herself brought in the tray, the girl having run off into the village during the afternoon, too full of excitement at the proceedings to remember her state of life. However, almost before the sad lovers had said anything to each other, Martha came in in a steaming state.

"O, there's such a stoor, Mrs. Newberry and Mr. Stockdale! The king's excitement can't get the carts ready nohow at all! They pulled Thomas Ballam's, and William Rogers's, and Stephen Sprake's carts into the road, and off came the wheels, and down fell the carts; and they found there was no linch-pins in the arms; and then they tried Samuel Shane's waggon, and found that the screws were gone from he, and at last they looked at the dairymen's cart, and he's got none neither! They have gone now to the blacksmith's to get some made, but he's nowhere to be found!"

Stockdale looked at Lizzy, who blushed very slightly, and went out of the room, followed by Martha Sarah. But before they had got through the passage there was a rap at the front door, and Stockdale recognized Latimer's voice addressing Mrs. Newberry, who had turned back.

"For God's sake, Mrs. Newberry, have you seen Hardman the blacksmith up this way? If we could get hold of him, we'd e'en a'most drag him by the hair of his head to his anvil, where he ought to be."

"He's an idle man, Mr. Latimer," said Lizzy archly. "What do you want him for?"

"Why, there isn't a horse in the place that has got more than three shoes on, and some have only two. The waggon-wheels be without strakes, and there's no linch-pins to the carts. What with that, and the bother about every set of harness being out of order, we shan't be off before nightfall—upon my soul we shan't. 'Tis a rough lot, Mrs. Newberry, that you've got about you here; but they'll play at this game once too often, mark my words they will! There's not a man in the parish that don't deserve to be whipped."

It happened that Hardman was at that moment a little further up the lane, smoking his pipe behind a holly bush. When Latimer had done speaking he went on in this direction, and Hardman, hearing the exciseman's steps, found curiosity too strong for prudence. He peeped out from the bush at the very moment that Latimer's glance was on it. There was nothing left for him to do but to come forward with unconcern.

"I've been looking for you for the last hour!" said Latimer with a glare in his eye.

"Sorry to hear that," said Hardman. "I've been out for a stroll, to look for more hid tubs, to deliver 'em up to Goverment."

"O, yes, Hardman, we know it," said Latimer, with withering sarcasm. "We

know that you'll deliver 'em up to Goverment. We know that all the parish is helping us, and have been all day! Now you please walk along with me down to your shop, and kindly let me hire ye in the king's name."

They went down the lane together; and presently there resounded from the smithy the ring of a hammer not very briskly swung. However, the carts and horses were got into some sort of traveling condition, but it was not until after the clock had stuck six, when the muddy roads were glistening under the horizontal light of the fading day. The smuggled tubs were soon packed into the vehicles, and Latimer, with three of his assistants, drove slowly out of the village in the direction of the port of Budmouth, some considerable number of miles distant, the other excisemen being left to watch for the remainder of the cargo, which they knew to have been sunk somewhere between Ringsworth and Lulstead Cove, and to unearth Owlett, the only person clearly implicated by the discovery of the cave.

Women and children stood at the doors as the carts, each chalked with the Government pitchfork, passed in the increasing twilight; and as they stood they looked at the confiscated property with a melancholy expression that told only too plainly the relation which they bore to the trade.

"Well, Lizzy," said Stockdale, when the crackle of the wheels had nearly died away. "This is a fit finish to your adventure. I am truly thankful that you have got off without suspicion, and the loss only of the liquor. Will you sit down and let me talk to you?"

"By and by," she said. "But I must go out now."

"Not to that horrid shore again?" he said blankly.

"No, not there. I am only going to see the end of this day's business."

He did not answer to this, and she moved toward the door slowly, as if waiting for him to say something more.

"You don't offer to come with me," she added at last. "I suppose that's because you hate me after all this?"

"Can you say it, Lizzy, when you know I only want to save you from such practices? Come with you!—of course I will, if it is only to take care of you. But why will you go out again?"

"Because I cannot rest indoors. Something is happening, and I must know what. Now, come!" And they went into the dusk together.

When they reached the turnpike-road she turned to the right, and he soon perceived that they were following the direction of the excisemen and their load. He had given her his arm, and every now and then she suddenly pulled it back, to signify that he was to halt a moment and listen. They had walked rather quickly along the first quarter of a mile, and on the second or third time of standing still she said, "I hear them ahead—don't you?"

"Yes," he said; "I hear the wheels. But what of that?"

"I only want to know if they get clear away from the neighbourhood."

"Ah," said he, a light breaking upon him. "Something desperate is to be attempted!—and now I remember there was not a man about the village when we left."

"Hark!" she murmured. The noise of the cartwheels had stopped, and given place to another sort of sound.

"'Tis a scuffle!" said Stockdale. "There'll be murder! Lizzy, let go my arm; I am going on. On my conscience, I must not stay here and do nothing!"

"There'll be no murder, and not even a broken head," she said. "Our men are thirty to four of them: no harm will be done at all."

"Then there is an attack!" exclaimed Stockdale; "and you knew it was to be. Why should you side with men who break the laws like this?"

"Why should you side with men who take from country traders what they have honestly bought with their own money in France?" said she firmly.

"They are not honestly bought," said he.

"They are," she contradicted. "I and Owlett and the others paid thirty shillings for every one of the tubs before they were put on board at Cherbourg, and if a king who is nothing to us sends his people to steal our property, we have a right to steal it back again."

Stockdale did not stop to argue the matter, but went quickly in the direction of the noise, Lizzy keeping at his side. "Don't you interfere, will you, dear Richard?" she said anxiously, as they drew near. "Don't let us go any closer: 'tis at Warm'ell Cross where they are seizing 'em. You can do no good, and you may meet with a hard blow!"

"Let us see first what is going on," he said. But before they had got much further the noise of the cartwheels began again; and Stockdale soon found that they were coming toward him. In another minute

the three carts came up, and Stockdale and Lizzy stood in the ditch to let them pass.

Instead of being conducted by four men, as had happened when they went out of the village, the horses and carts were now accompanied by a body of from twenty to thirty, all of whom, as Stockdale perceived to his astonishment, had blackened faces. Among them walked six or eight huge female figures, whom, from their wide strides, Stockdale guessed to be men in disguise. As soon as the party discerned Lizzy and her companion four or five fell back, and when the carts had passed, came close to the pair.

"There is no walking up this way for the present," said one of the gaunt women, who wore curls a foot long, dangling down the sides of her face, in the fashion of the time. Stockdale recognized this lady's voice as Owlett's.

"Why not?" said Stockdale. "This is the public highway."

"Now look here, youngster," said Owlett. "O, 'tis the Methodist parson!—what, and Mrs. Newberry! Well, you'd better not go up that way, Lizzy. They've all run off, and folks have got their own again."

The miller then hastened on and joined his comrades. Stockdale and Lizzy also turned back. "I wish all this hadn't been forced upon us," she said regretfully. "But if those excisemen had got off with the tubs, half the people in the parish would have been in want for the next month or two."

Stockdale was not paying much attention to her words, and he said, "I don't think I can go back like this. Those four poor excisemen may be murdered for all I know."

"Murdered!" said Lizzy impatiently. "We don't do murder here."

"Well, I shall go as far as Warm'ell Cross to see," said Stockdale decisively; and, without wishing her safe home or anything else, the minister turned back. Lizzy stood looking at him till his form was absorbed in the shades; and then, with sadness, she went in the direction of Nether-Moynton.

The road was lonely, and after nightfall at this time of the year there was often not a passer for hours. Stockdale pursued his way without hearing a sound beyond that of his own footsteps; and in due time he passed beneath the trees of the plantation which surrounded the Warm'ell Cross-road. Before he had reached the point of intersection he heard voices from the thicket.

"Hoi-hoi-hoi! Help, help!"

The voices were not at all feeble or

despairing, but they were unmistakably anxious. Stockdale had no weapon, and before plunging into the pitchy darkness of the plantation he pulled a stake from the hedge, to use in case of need. When he got among the trees he shouted—"What's the matter—where are you?"

"Here," answered the voices; and, pushing through the brambles in that direction, he came near the objects of his search.

"Why don't you come forward?" said Stockdale.

"We be tied to the trees?"

"Who are you?"

"Poor Will Latimer the exciseman!" said one plaintively. "Just come and cut these cords, there's a good man. We were afraid nobody would pass by to-night."

Stockdale soon loosened them, upon which they stretched their limbs and stood at their ease.

"The rascals!" said Latimer, getting now into a rage, though he had seemed quite meek when Stockdale first came up. "'Tis the same set of fellows. I know they were Moynton chaps to a man."

"But we can't swear to 'em," said another. "Not one of 'em spoke."

"What are you going to do?" said Stockdale.

"I'd fain go back to Moynton, and have at 'em again!" said Latimer.

"So would we!" said his comrades.

"Fight till we die!" said Latimer.

"We will, we will!" said his men.

"But," said Latimer, more frigidly, as they came out of the plantation, "we don't *know* that these chaps with black faces were Moynton men? And proof is a hard thing."

"So it is," said the rest.

"And therefore we won't do nothing at all," said Latimer, with complete dispassionateness. "For my part, I'd sooner be them than we. The clitches of my arms are burning like fire from the cords those two strapping women tied round 'em. My opinion is, now I have had time to think o't, that you may serve your Government at too high a price. For these two nights and days I have not had an hour's rest; and, please God, here's for home-along."

The other officers agreed heartily to this course; and, thanking Stockdale for his timely assistance, they parted from him at the Cross, taking themselves the western road, and Stockdale going back to Nether-Moynton.

During that walk the minister was lost in reverie of the most painful kind. As soon as he got into the house, and before

entering his own rooms, he advanced to the door of the little back parlour in which Lizzy usually sat with her mother. He found her there alone. Stockdale went forward, and, like a man in a dream, looked down upon the table that stood between him and the young woman, who had her bonnet and cloak still on. As he did not speak, she looked up from her chair at him, with misgiving in her eye.

"Where are they gone?" he then said listlessly.

"Who?—I don't know. I have seen nothing of them since. I came straight in here."

"If your men can manage to get off with those tubs, it will be a great profit to you, I suppose?"

"A share will be mine, a share my cousin Owlett's, a share to each of the two farmers, and a share divided amongst the men who helped us."

"And you still think," he went on slowly, "that you will not give this business up?"

Lizzy rose, and put her hand upon his shoulder. "Don't ask that," she whispered. "You don't know what you are asking. I must tell you, though I meant not to do it. What I make by that trade is all I have to keep my mother and myself with."

He was astonished. "I did not dream of such a thing," he said. "I would rather have swept the streets, had I been you. What is money compared with a clear conscience?"

"My conscience is clear. I know my mother, but the king I have never seen. His dues are nothing to me. But it is a great deal to me that my mother and I should live."

"Marry me, and promise to give it up. I will keep your mother."

"It is good of you," she said, trembling a little. "Let me think of it by myself. I would rather not answer now."

She reserved her answer till the next day, and came into his room with a solemn face. "I cannot do what you wished!" she said passionately. "It is too much to ask. My whole life ha' been passed in this way." Her words and manner showed that before entering she had been struggling with herself in private, and that the contention had been strong.

Stockdale turned pale, but he spoke quietly. "Then, Lizzy, we must part. I cannot go against my principles in this matter, and I cannot make my profession a mockery. You know how I love you, and what I would do for you; but this one thing I cannot do."

"But why should you belong to that profession?" she burst out. "I have got this large house; why can't you marry me, and live here with us, and not be a Methodist preacher any more? I assure you, Richard, it is no harm, and I wish you could only see it as I do! We only carry it on in winter; in summer it is never done at all. It stirs up one's dull life at this time o' the year, and gives excitement, which I have got so used to now that I should hardly know how to do without it. At nights, when the wind blows, instead of being dull and stupid, and not noticing whether it do blow or not, your mind is afield, even if you are not afield yourself; and you are wondering how the chaps are getting on; and you walk up and down the room, and look out o' window, and then you go out yourself, and know your way about as well by night as by day, and have hairbreadth escapes from old Latimer and his fellows, who are too stupid ever to really frighten us, and only make us a bit nimble."

"He frightened you a little last night, anyhow: and I would advise you to drop it before it is worse."

She shook her head. "No, I must go on as I have begun. I was born to it. It is in my blood, and I can't be cured. O, Richard, you cannot think what a hard thing you have asked, and how sharp you try me when you put me between this and my love for 'ee!"

Stockdale was leaning with his elbow on the mantelpiece, his hands over his eyes. "We ought never to have met, Lizzy," he said. "It was an ill day for us! I little thought there was anything so hopeless and impossible in our engagement as this. Well, it is too late now to regret consequences in this way. I have had the happiness of seeing you and knowing you at least."

"You dissent from Church, and I dissent from State," she said. "And I don't see why we are not well matched."

He smiled sadly, while Lizzy remained looking down, her eyes beginning to overflow.

That was an unhappy evening for both of them, and the days that followed were unhappy days. Both she and he went mechanically about their employments, and his depression was marked in the village by more than one of his denomination with whom he came in contact. But Lizzy, who passed her days indoors, was unsuspected of being the cause: for it was generally understood that a quiet engagement to

marry existed between her and her cousin Owlett, and had existed for some time.

Thus uncertainly the week passed on; till one morning Stockdale said to her: "I have had a letter, Lizzy. I must call you that till I am gone."

"Gone?" said she blankly.

"Yes," he said. "I am going from this place. I felt it would be better for us both that I should not stay after what has happened. In fact, I couldn't stay here, and look on you from day to day, without becoming weak and faltering in my course. I have just heard of an arrangement by which the other minister can arrive here in about a week; and let me go elsewhere."

That he had all this time continued so firmly fixed in his resolution came upon her as a grievous surprise. "You never loved me!" she said bitterly.

"I might say the same," he returned; "but I will not. Grant me one favour. Come and hear my last sermon on the day before I go."

Lizzy, who was a church-goer on Sunday mornings, frequently attended Stockdale's chapel in the evening with the rest of the double-minded; and she promised.

It became known that Stockdale was going to leave, and a good many people outside his own sect were sorry to hear it. The intervening days flew rapidly away, and on the evening of the Sunday which preceded the morning of his departure Lizzy sat in the chapel to hear him for the last time. The little building was full to overflowing, and he took up the subject which all had expected, that of the contraband trade so extensively practised among them. His hearers, in laying his words to their own hearts, did not perceive that they were most particularly directed against Lizzy, till the sermon waxed warm, and Stockdale nearly broke down with emotion. In truth, his own earnestness, and her sad eyes looking up at him, were too much for the young man's equanimity. He hardly knew how he ended. He saw Lizzy, as through a mist, turn and go away with the rest of the congregation; and shortly afterwards followed her home.

She invited him to supper, and they sat down alone, her mother having, as was usual with her on Sunday nights, gone to bed early.

"We will part friends, won't we?" said Lizzy, with forced gaiety, and never alluding to the sermon: a reticence which rather disappointed him.

"We will," he said, with a forced smile on his part; and they sat down.

It was the first meal that they had ever shared together in their lives, and probably the last that they would so share. When it was over, and the indifferent conversation could no longer be continued, he arose and took her hand. "Lizzy," he said, "do you say we must part—do you?"

"You do," she said solemnly. "I can say no more."

"Nor I," said he. "If that is your answer, good-bye!"

Stockdale bent over her and kissed her, and she involuntarily returned his kiss. "I shall go early," he said hurriedly. "I shall not see you again."

And he did leave early. He fancied, when stepping forth into the gray morning light, to mount the van which was to carry him away, that he saw a face between the parted curtains of Lizzy's window, but the light was faint, and the panes glistened with wet; so he could not be sure. Stockdale mounted the vehicle, and was gone; and on the following Sunday the new minister preached in the chapel of the Moynton Wesleyans.

One day, two years after the parting, Stockdale, now settled in a midland town, came into Nether-Moynton by carrier in the original way. Jogging along in the van that afternoon he had put questions to the driver, and the answers that he received interested the minister deeply. The result of them was that he went without the least hesitation to the door of his former lodging. It was about six o'clock in the evening, and the same time of year as when he had left; now, too, the ground was damp and glistening, the west was bright, and Lizzy's snowdrops were raising their heads in the border under the wall.

Lizzy must have caught sight of him from the window, for by the time that he reached the door she was there holding it open: and then, as if she had not sufficiently considered her act of coming out, she drew herself back, saying with some constraint, "Mr. Stockdale!"

"You knew it was," said Stockdale, taking her hand. "I wrote to say I should call."

"Yes, but you did not say when," she answered.

"I did not. I was not quite sure when my business would lead me to these parts."

"You only came because business brought you near?"

"Well, that is the fact; but I have often thought I should like to come on purpose

to see you. . . . But what's all this that has happened? I told you how it would be, Lizzy, and you would not listen to me."

"I would not," she said sadly. "But I had been brought up to that life; and it was second nature to me. However, it is all over now. The officers have blood-money for taking a man dead or alive, and the trade is going to nothing. We were hunted down like rats."

"Owlett is quite gone, I hear."

"Yes. He is in America. We had a dreadful struggle that last time, when they tried to take him. It is a perfect miracle that he lived through it; and it is a wonder that I was not killed. I was shot in the hand. It was not by aim; the shot was really meant for my cousin; but I was behind, looking on as usual, and the bullet came to me. It bled terribly, but I got home without fainting; and it healed after a time. You know how he suffered?"

"No," said Stockdale. "I only heard that he just escaped with his life."

"He was shot in the back; but a rib turned the ball. He was badly hurt. We would not let him be took. The men carried him all night across the meads to Kingsbere, and hid him in a barn, dressing his wound as well as they could, till he was so far recovered as to be able to get about. He had gied up his mill for some time; and at last he got to Bristol, and took a passage to America, and he's settled in Wisconsin."

"What do you think of smuggling now?" said the minister gravely.

"I own that we were wrong," said she. "But I have suffered for it. I am very poor now, and my mother has been dead these twelve months. . . . But won't you come in, Mr. Stockdale?"

Stockdale went in; and it is to be supposed that they came to an understanding; for a fortnight later there was a sale of Lizzy's furniture, and after that a wedding at a chapel in a neighbouring town.

He took her away from her old haunts to the home that he had made for himself in his native county, where she studied her duties as a minister's wife with praiseworthy assiduity. It is said that in after years she wrote an excellent tract called *Render unto Caesar; or, The Repentant Villagers*, in which her own experience was anonymously used as the introductory story. Stockdale got it printed, after making some corrections, and putting in a few powerful sentences of his own; and many hundreds of copies were distributed by the couple in the course of their married life.

The English Mail-Coach

From the Essay by

THOMAS DE QUINCEY



THE modern modes of traveling cannot compare with the old mail-coach system in grandeur and power. They boast of more velocity, not, however, as a consciousness, but as a fact of our lifeless knowledge, resting upon *alien* evidence; as, for instance, because somebody *says* that we have gone fifty miles in the hour, though we are far from feeling it as a personal experience, or upon the evidence of a result, as that actually we find ourselves in York four hours after leaving London. Apart from such an assertion, or such a result, I myself am little aware of the pace. But, seated on the old mail-coach, we needed no evidence out of ourselves to indicate the velocity. On this system the word was, *Non magna loquimur*, as upon railways, but *vivimus*. Yes, "*magna vivimus*"; we do not make verbal ostentation of our grandeurs, we realize our grandeurs in act, and in the very experience of life. The vital experience of the glad animal sensibilities made doubts impossible on the question of our speed; we saw it, we felt it as thrilling; and this speed was not the product of blind insensate agencies, that had no sympathy to give, but was incarnated in the fiery eyeballs of the noblest amongst brutes, in his dilated nostril, spasmodic muscles, and thunder-beating hoofs. The sensibility of the horse, uttering itself in the maniac light of his eye, might be the last vibration of such a movement; the glory of Salamanca might be the first. But the intervening links that connected them, that spread the earthquake of battle into the eyeball of the horse, were the heart of man and its electric thrillings—kindling in the rapture of the fiery strife, and then propagating its own tumults by contagious shouts and gestures to the heart of his servant the horse.

But now, on the new system of traveling, iron tubes and boilers have disconnected man's heart from the ministers of his loco-

motion. Nile nor Trafalgar has power to raise an extra bubble in a steam-kettle. The galvanic cycle is broken up forever; man's imperial nature no longer sends itself forward through the electric sensibility of the horse; the inter-agencies are gone in the mode of communication between the horse and his master, out of which grew so many aspects of sublimity under accidents of mists that hid, or sudden blazes that revealed, of mobs that agitated, or midnight solitudes that awed. Tidings, fitted to convulse all nations, must henceforward travel by culinary process; and the trumpet that once announced from afar the laurelled mail, heart-shaking, when heard screaming on the wind, and proclaiming itself through the darkness to every village or solitary house on its route, has now given way forever to the pot-wallplings of the boiler.

Thus have perished multiform openings for public expressions of interest, scenical yet natural, in great national tidings; for revelations of faces and groups that could not offer themselves amongst the fluctuating mobs of a railway station. The gatherings of gazers about a laurelled mail had one center, and acknowledged one sole interest. But the crowds attending at a railway station have as little unity as running water, and own as many centers as there are separate carriages in the train.

How else, for example, than as a constant watcher for the dawn, and for the London mail that in summer months entered about daybreak amongst the lawny thickets of Marlborough forest, couldst thou, sweet Fanny of the Bath road, have become the glorified inmate of my dreams? Yet Fanny, as the loveliest young woman for face and person that perhaps in my whole life I have beheld, merited the station which even now, from a distance of forty years, she holds in my dreams; yes, though by links of natural association she brings along with her a troop of dreadful creatures, fabulous and not fabulous, that are more

abominable to the heart, than Fanny and the dawn are delightful.

Miss Fanny of the Bath road, strictly speaking, lived at a mile's distance from that road; but came so continually to meet the mail, that I on my frequent transits rarely missed her, and naturally connected her image with the great thoroughfare where only I had ever seen her. Why she came so punctually, I do not exactly know; but I believe with some burden of commissions to be executed in Bath, which had gathered to her own residence as a central rendezvous for converging them. The mail-coachman who drove the Bath mail, and wore the royal livery, happened to be Fanny's grandfather. A good man he was, that loved his beautiful granddaughter; and, loving her wisely, was vigilant over her deportment in any case where young Oxford might happen to be concerned. Did my vanity then suggest that I myself, individually, could fall within the line of his terrors? Certainly not, as regarded any physical pretensions that I could plead; for Fanny (as a chance passenger from her own neighbourhood once told me) counted in her train a hundred and ninety-nine professed admirers, if not open aspirants to her favour; and probably not one of the whole brigade but excelled myself in personal advantages. Ulysses even, with the unfair advantage of his accursed bow, could hardly have undertaken that amount of suitors. So the danger might have seemed slight—only that woman is universally aristocratic; it is amongst her nobilities of heart that she is so. Now, the aristocratic distinctions in my favour might easily with Miss Fanny have compensated my physical deficiencies. Did I then make love to Fanny? Why, yes; about as much love as one *could* make whilst the mail was changing horses—a process which, ten-years later, did not occupy above eighty seconds, but *then*—viz., about Waterloo—it occupied about five times eighty. Now, four hundred seconds offer a field quite ample enough for whispering into a young woman's ear a great deal of truth, and (by way of parenthesis) some trifle of falsehood. Grandpapa did right, therefore, to watch me. And yet, as happens too often to the grandpapas of earth, in a contest with admirers of granddaughters, how vainly would he have watched me had I meditated any evil whispers to Fanny! She, it is my belief, would have protected herself against any man's evil suggestions. But he, as the result showed, could not have intercepted the opportunities

for such suggestions. Yet, why not? Was he not active? Was he not blooming? Blooming he was as Fanny herself.

"Say, all our praises why should lords——"

Stop, that's not the line.

"Say, all our roses why should girls engross?"

The coachman showed rosy blossoms on his face deeper even than his granddaughter's—his being drawn from the ale-cask, Fanny's from the fountains of the dawn. But, in spite of his blooming face, some infirmities he had; and one particularly in which he too much resembled a crocodile. This lay in a monstrous inaptitude for turning around. The crocodile, I presume, owes that inaptitude to the absurd *length* of his back; but in our grandpapa it arose rather from the absurd *breadth* of his back, combined, possibly, with some growing stiffness in his legs. Now, upon this crocodile infirmity of his I planted a human advantage for tendering my homage to Miss Fanny. In defiance of all his honourable vigilance, no sooner had he presented to us his mighty Jovian back (what a field for displaying to mankind his royal scarlet!), whilst inspecting professionally the buckles, the straps, and the silvery turrets of his harness, than I raised Miss Fanny's hand to my lips, and, by the mixed tenderness and respectfulness of my manner, caused her easily to understand how happy it would make me to rank upon her list as No. 10 or 12, in which case a few casualties amongst her lovers (and observe, they *hanged* liberally in those days) might have promoted me speedily to the top of the tree; as, on the other hand, with how much loyalty of submission I acquiesced by anticipation in her award, supposing that she should plant me in the very rearward of her favour, as No. 199 + 1. Most truly I loved this beautiful and ingenious girl; and had it not been for the Bath mail, timing all courtships by post-office allowance, heaven only knows what might have come of it. People talk of being over head and ears in love; now, the mail was the cause that I sank only over ears in love, which, you know, still left a trifle of brain to overlook the whole conduct of the affair.

Ah, reader! when I look back upon those days, it seems to me that all things change—all things perish. "Perish the roses and the palms of kings": perish even the crowns and trophies of Waterloo: thunder and lightning are not the thunder and lightning which I remember. Roses are degenerating. The Fannies of our island—though this I say

with reluctance—are not visibly improving; and the Bath road is notoriously superannuated. Crocodiles, you will say, are stationary. Mr. Waterton tells me that the crocodile does *not* change; that a cayman, in fact, or an alligator, is just as good for riding upon as he was in the time of the Pharaohs. *That* may be; but the reason is, that the crocodile does not live fast—he is a slow coach. I believe it is generally understood among naturalists, that the crocodile is a blockhead. It is my own impression that the Pharaohs were also blockheads. Now, as the Pharaohs and the crocodile domineered over Egyptian society, this accounts for a singular mistake that prevailed through innumerable generations on the Nile. The crocodile made the ridiculous blunder of supposing man to be meant chiefly for his own eating. Man, taking a different view of the subject, naturally met that mistake by another: he viewed the crocodile as a thing sometimes to worship, but always to run away from. And this continued until Mr. Waterton changed the relations between the animals. The mode of escaping from the reptile he showed to be, not by running away, but by leaping on its back, booted and spurred. The two animals had misunderstood each other. The use of the crocodile has now been cleared up—viz., to be ridden; and the final cause of man is, that he may improve the health of the crocodile by riding him a-fox-hunting before breakfast. And it is pretty certain that any crocodile, who has been regularly hunted through the season, and is master of the weight he carries, will take a six-barred gate now as well as ever he would have done in the infancy of the pyramids.

If, therefore, the crocodile does *not* change, all things else undeniably *do*: even the shadow of the pyramids grows less.

And often the restoration in vision of Fanny and the Bath road, makes me too pathetically sensible of that truth. Out of the darkness, if I happen to call back the image of Fanny, up rises suddenly from a gulf of forty years a rose in June; or, if I think for an instant of the rose in June, up rises the heavenly face of Fanny. One after the other, like the antiphonies in the choral service, rise Fanny and the rose in June, then back again the rose in June and Fanny. Then come both together, as in a chorus—roses and Fannies, Fannies and roses, without end, thick as blossoms in paradise. Then comes a venerable crocodile, in a royal livery of scarlet and gold, with sixteen capes; and the crocodile is driving four-in-hand from the box of the Bath mail. And suddenly we upon the mail are pulled up by a mighty dial, sculptured with the hours, that mingle with the heavens and the heavenly host. Then all at once we are arrived at Marlborough forest, amongst the lovely households of the roe-deer; the deer and their fawns retire into the dewy thickets; the thickets are rich with roses; once again the roses call up the sweet countenance of Fanny; and she, being the granddaughter of a crocodile, awakens a dreadful host of semi-legendary animals—griffins, dragons, basilisks, sphinxes—till at length the whole vision of fighting images crowds into one towering armorial shield, a vast emblazonry of human charities and human loveliness that have perished, but quartered heraldically with unutterable and demoniac natures, whilst over all rises, as a surmounting crest, one fair female hand, with the forefinger pointing, in sweet, sorrowful admonition, upward to heaven, where is sculptured the eternal writing which proclaims the frailty of earth and her children.

I

nvective

A Few Efforts to Find Words
and Wishes for People Disliked

"Spinning-Jenny Peel—with his smile like the silver plate on a coffin."

DANIEL O'CONNELL.

WHEN THE WORLD WAR CAME TO BOTHWELL BEACH

Hiram Esterley put the general sentiment in a nutshell:

"We've got to find out some way what the United States is going to do for us. It can't leave us high and dry, this way. We're citizens and our business has got to be protected; and we've got rights that must be respected. Yes, sir! We must make the Government say what it's going to do for us!"

An absolutely strange voice broke on our ears. We started up and looked round for its source. Then, to our complete astonishment, we understood that the Commodore was speaking.

"What!" he roared at us, his usually pallid face aflame. "Do I understand you triply condemned offspring of a degenerate tribe of unpedigreed nonentities to intimate that the United States has got to say what it's going to do for a lot of unqualified lost souls without any anatomical feature except a cartilaginous spine and an ochre-coloured liver?"

We gaped in amazement at the usually mellifluously spoken Old Man. His shaggy brows were drawn down in a portentous scowl. His voice rasped, like shark skin:

"You heaven-forsaken Gadarene swine mean to sit here on this quadruplicate replica of the sweet by-and-by and demand that your own country take any pains at all to warm your d—d milk for you so you can write to the girls for fresh pictures to stick up in your everlastingly condemned looking-glasses, and smirk—yes, smirk, by the 'ternal—at your own malformed flat faces?"

The Commodore brought his hand down on the outspread paper with a bang that rattled the blinds.

"Have a drink, sir," sneered Sam. "You're overheated."

The Old Man glared at the proffered glass, snatched it, and, flung the liquor on the floor, with what was strangely like a sob. Then he got to his feet, and included us all in a glance so savage, contemptuous and scorching that we involuntarily drew back to give him passage. He went out, slammed the screen behind him so that its hinges snapped, and strode down the white-sand pathway toward the beach.

"Now what do you think of that?" muttered Sam.

"Think?" repeated Esterley with an entire change of manner. "Think? We daren't think!" JOHN FLEMING WILSON.

("Todo' lo' Gačé, todo' lo' Gačé

Se vean fríto' en un sartí!")

"May all the Gentiles to a man

Be fried together in a pan!"

Song of the Cordova Gitana (IRVING BROWN).

A ROMAN CONSUL DENOUNCES A CONSPIRATOR

You ought, O Catiline, long ago to have been led to execution by command of the consul. That destruction which you have been long plotting against us ought to have already fallen on your own head. . . .

If, O Catiline, I should now order you to be arrested, to be put to death, I should, I suppose, have to fear lest all good men should say that I had acted tardily, rather than that any one should affirm that I had acted cruelly. But yet this, which ought to have been done long since, I have good reason for not doing as yet; I will put you to death, then, when there shall be not one person possible to be found, so wicked, so abandoned, so like yourself, as not to allow that it has been rightly done. . . .

. . . Wherefore, since I do not yet venture to do that which is the best thing, and which belongs to my office and to the discipline of our ancestors, I will do that which is more merciful if we regard its rigour, and more expedient for the state. For if I order you to be put to death, the rest of the conspirators will still remain in the republic; if, as I have long been exhorting you, you depart, your companions, these worthless dregs of the republic, will be drawn off from the city too. . . .

For what is there, O Catiline, that can now afford you any pleasure in this city? for there is no one in it, except that band of profligate conspirators of yours, who does not fear you—no one who does not hate you. What brand of domestic baseness is not stamped upon your life? What disgraceful circumstance is wanting to your infamy in your private affairs? From what licentiousness have your eyes, from what atrocity have your hands, from what iniquity has your whole body ever abstained? . . .

First Oration against Catiline (MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO).

AND IN CALIFORNIA TWENTY CENTURIES LATER

What! you a Senator?—you, Mike de Young?
Still reeking of the gutter whence you sprung?
Sir, if all Senators were such as you—
Their hands so slender and so crimson too
(Shaped to the pocket for commercial work,
For literary, fitted to the dirk)—
So black their hearts, so lily-white their livers—
The toga's touch would give a man the shivers!

To an Aspirant. AMBROSE BIERCE.

DEAN SWIFT'S IDEA OF HIS COUNTRYMEN .

"My little friend, Grildrig, you have made a most admirable panegyric upon your country; you have clearly proved that ignorance, idleness and vice are the proper ingredients for qualifying a legislator; that laws are best explained, interpreted, and applied by those whose interest and abilities lie in perverting, confounding and eluding them. I observe among you some lines of an institution, which in its original might have been tolerable, but these half erased, and the rest wholly blurred and blotted by corruptions. It doth not appear from all you have said, how any one perfection is required toward the procurement of any one station among you; much less that men are ennobled on account of their virtue, that priests are advanced for their piety or learning, soldiers for their conduct or valour, judges for their integrity, senators for the love of their country, or counselors for their wisdom. As for yourself," continued the King, "who have spent the greatest part of your life in traveling, I am well disposed to hope you may hitherto have escaped many vices of your country.

"But by what I have gathered from your own relation, and the answers I have with much pains wrung and exhorted from you, I cannot but conclude the bulk of your natives to be the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth." *Gulliver's Travels*. JONATHAN SWIFT.

"Disgusting exhibition," said Aylmer, loftily. "What could father ever see in you? You are as estimable as a heap of garbage." JOSEPH CONRAD.

WHEN THE REV. DR. HYDE CALLED FATHER DAMIEN
"A COARSE, DIRTY MAN, HEADSTRONG AND
BIGOTED," WHO DIED OF "HIS VICES AND
CARELESSNESS"

You know enough, doubtless, of the process of canonization to be aware that, a hundred years after the death of Damien, there will appear a man charged with the painful office of *devil's advocate*. After that noble brother of mine, and of all frail clay, shall have laid a century at rest, one shall accuse, one defend him. The circumstance is unusual that the devil's advocate should be a volunteer, should be a member of a sect immediately rival, and should make haste to take upon himself his ugly office ere the bones are cold; unusual, and of a taste which I shall leave my readers free to qualify; unusual, and to me inspiring. If I have at all learned the trade of using words to convey truth and to arouse emotion, you have at last furnished me with a subject. For it is in the interest of all mankind and the cause of public decency in every quarter of the world, not only that Damien should be righted, but that you and your letter should be displayed at length, in their true colors, to the public eye. . . . I conceive you as a man quite beyond and below the reticences of civility: with what measure you mete, with that shall it be measured you again; with you, at last, I rejoice to feel the button off the foil and to plunge home. And if aught that I shall say should offend others, your colleagues, whom I respect and remember with affection, I can but offer them my regret; I am not free, I am inspired by the consideration of interests far more large; and such pain as can be inflicted by anything from me must be indeed trifling when compared with the pain with which they read your letter. It is not the hangman, but the criminal, that brings dishonour on the house. . . .

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

AT AN IRISH WAKE

"May the light fade from your eyes, so that you may never see what you love! May the grass grow at your door! May you fade into nothing, like snow in summer. May your own blood rise against ye, and the sweetest drink ye take be the bitterest cup of sorrow! May ye die without benefit of clergy!"

W. G. WOOD-MARTIN.

THE IMPEACHMENT OF WARREN HASTINGS

. . . My lords, I do not mean now to go farther than just to remind your lordships of this—that Mr. Hastings' government was one whole system of oppression, of robbery of individuals, of spoliation of the public, and of the supersession of the whole system of the English government, in order to vest in the worst of the natives all the power that could possibly exist in any government; in order to defeat the ends which all governments ought, in common, to have in view. In the name of the Commons of England, I charge all this villainy upon Warren Hastings, in this last moment of my application to you. . . .

Do you want a criminal, my lords? When was there so much iniquity ever laid to the charge of any one? No, my lords, you must not look to punish any other such delinquent from India. Warren Hastings has not left substance enough in India to nourish such another delinquent. . . .

Therefore, it is with confidence that, ordered by the Commons,

I impeach Warren Hastings, Esquire, of high crimes and misdemeanors.

I impeach him in the name of the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament assembled, whose parliamentary trust he has betrayed.

I impeach him in the name of all the Commons of Great Britain, whose national character he has dishonoured.

I impeach him in the name of the people of India, whose laws, rights and liberties he has subverted; whose properties he has destroyed; whose country he has laid waste and desolate.

I impeach him in the name and by the virtue of those eternal laws of justice which he has violated.

I impeach him in the name of human nature itself, which he has cruelly outraged, injured and oppressed, in both sexes, in every age, rank, situation and condition of life.

EDMUND BURKE.

AFTER DISRAELI HAD TURNED TORY

. . . One who, if his genealogy could be traced, would be the lineal descendant and true heir-at-law of the impenitent thief who atoned for his crimes upon the cross.

DANIEL O'CONNELL.

THE ONE DENUNCIATION BY JESUS

But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in *yourselves*, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. . . .

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. . . .

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. . . .

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but within are full of dead *men's* bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. . . .

Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

MATTHEW.

DEFENDING AN EDITOR CHARGED WITH LIBELLING THE CLERGY OF DURHAM

The clergy have in fact largely used the public press and scurrilously and foully libelled the defendant. . . . Not that they wound deeply or injure much; but that is no fault of theirs: without hurting, they give trouble and discomfort. The insect brought to life by corruption, and nestled in filth, though its flight be lowly and its sting puny, can swarm and buzz and irritate the skin and offend the nostril, and altogether give us nearly as much annoyance as the wasp, whose nobler nature it aspires to emulate. These reverend slanderers—these pious back-biters—devoid of force to wield the sword, snatch the dagger; and destitute of wit to point or to barb it, and make it rankle in the wound, steep it in venom to make it fester in the scratch. LORD BROUGHAM.

PRINCE HAL SPEAKS "LIKE A KING"

PRINCE—Swearst thou, ungracious boy? Henceforth ne'er look on me. Thou art violently carried away from grace: there is a devil haunts thee in the likeness of an old fat man: a tun of man is thy companion. Why dost thou converse with that trunk of humours, that bolting-hutch of beastliness, that swollen parcel of dropsies, that huge bombard of sack, that stuffed cloak-bag of guts, that roasted Manning tree ox with the pudding in his belly, that reverend vice, that gray iniquity, that father ruffian, that vanity in years? Wherein is he good but to taste sack and drink it? Wherein neat and cleanly but to carve a capon and eat it? Wherein cunning, but in craft? Wherein crafty, but in villainy? Wherein villainous, but in all things? Wherein worthy but in nothing?

SHAKESPEARE.

THAT CHANT OF HATE

He is known to you all, he is known to you all,
He crouches behind the dark gray flood,
Full of envy, of rage, of craft, of gall,
Cut off by waves that are thicker than blood.
Come let us stand at the Judgment place,
An oath to swear to, face to face,
An oath of bronze no wind can shake
An oath for our sons and their sons to take.
Come hear the word, repeat the word,
Throughout the Fatherland make it heard.
We will never forego our hate,
We have all but a single hate,
We love as one, we hate as one,
We have one foe and one alone—
ENGLAND!

ERNST LISSAUER (1914).

THE MIND OF A TURKISH GENTLEMAN

[Part of an editorial in the official Kemalîst newspaper, "*Payam Sabah*," of Angora, on January 13, 1922; signed by Aka Giourlous, a journalist and Nationalist leader.]

Hatred against the British—in whose vocabulary impudence stands for *sang-froid*; meanness and vileness for truthfulness; insolence, hatred and despotism, for virtue and civilization, which must be the fundamental principle and basis of every true religion, whether founded on the Bible or not.

Mussulmans, whose minarets have been pulled to earth, whose holy sepulchres have been knocked down, whose children have been drowned, do you realize that if the columns on which religion stands are four, there should be a fifth one—

HATRED AGAINST THE BRITISH.

A Christian, who is proud of his Divine and Jewish ancestry, and who is anxious to get nearer to Jesus and Holy Mary, should rest on one sole conviction—

HATRED AGAINST THE BRITISH.

It is the British who sow discord and trouble amongst you, Oh servants of Christ! You should, therefore, know that if the Commandments of the Holy Spirit are ten in number, the eleventh should be—

HATRED AGAINST THE BRITISH.

In the yellow flames of the altar of the idolators, in the overthrow of the dark and dumb idols of those who worship the Fire, there is one pinnacle—

HATRED AGAINST THE BRITISH.

There is one enemy of the atheists, of the superstitious, of the simple-minded, and generally of all men, of the worms, the birds, the leopards, the hyenas, and also of the mountains, the streams, the vineyards, the flowers, of all-in-all—

ENGLAND IS THE ENEMY.

There is a certain force which dynamites civilization, kicks at virtue and opposes Humanity—

IT IS ENGLAND.

There is a typhoon which soaks with blood the cradle of the innocent, devastates the hearths, and causes a foam of blood to cover lips that wish to smile—

IT IS ENGLAND.

And you—the Army of the Greater and the Just—every time you massacre a Greek you are pulling down one of the corner-stones of the British Empire. Therefore—

FOR GOD'S SAKE, MASSACRE!

For the love of your country—Massacre!

In the name of crying humanity—Massacre!

In revenge for your dead brethren—Massacre!

For the salvation of the World, and the peace of Hell—Massacre!

THE ORATOR HAD BEEN INTERRUPTED BY A REPEATED CRY OF "LOUDER!"

Mr. President, on the last day, when the Angel Gabriel shall have descended from the heavens, and, placing one foot upon the sea and the other upon the land, shall lift to his lips the golden trumpet, and proclaim to the living and to the resurrected dead that time shall be no more,—I have no doubt, sir, that some infernal fool from Buffalo will start up and cry out: "*Louder, please, sir, louder!*" THOMAS MARSHALL.

A LETTER TO THE EMPLOYERS DURING THE STRIKE OF 1913

You may succeed in your policy and ensure your own damnation by your victory. The men whose manhood you have broken will loathe you, and will always be brooding and scheming to strike a fresh blow. The children will be taught to curse you. The infant being moulded in the womb will have breathed into its starved body the vitality of hate. It is not they—it is you who are blind Samsons pulling down the pillars of the social order. You are sounding the death knell of autocracy in industry. There was autocracy in political life, and it was superseded by democracy. So surely will democratic power wrest from you the control of industry. The fate of you, the aristocracy of industry, will be as the fate of the aristocracy of land if you do not show that you have some humanity still among you. Humanity abhors, above all things, a vacuum in itself, and your class will be cut off from humanity as the surgeon cuts the cancer and alien growth from the body. Be warned ere it is too late. A. E. (GEORGE W. RUSSELL).

CHATHAM TO LORD HOLLAND, IN THE HOUSE

"There are some persons" (looking his opponent squarely in the eye) "upon whose faces the hand of Heaven has so *stamped* the mark of wickedness, that it were impiety not to give it credit." WM. PITT, EARL OF CHATHAM.

(To be continued)

The Great Arctic Handicap

By JOHN FLEMING WILSON

Yours truly
John Fleming Wilson



IN THE first place, I was charged by a friend to procure him a skillful engineer for his fifty-five-foot gasoline cruiser, *Lasy Lass*, in which he purposed to invade the unknown parts of the Pacific Ocean. He gave me this delicate office because of a supposed experience on deep waters which made me an infallible judge of sobriety, mechanical ability and seafaring aptitude. I hid me to the desk of the superintendent of the United Engine Company, in San Francisco, and informed that gentleman that the *Lasy Lass*, equipped with United engines, was fitting for a long cruise. "The owner wishes to engage the most capable engineer available," I told him.

The superintendent stared at me. "I am aware that when a man owns a typewriter he goes to the office of the agent of that make of machine for an operator," he said. "It seems probable that the man who manufactures a thing knows people who can run it best; but in all my experience I never before was consulted as to who should run my engines. The compliment is appreciated. I won't recommend either a chauffeur out of a job or a man who sells gasoline lamps on the side." He rang and ordered a clerk to 'phone to the shops and ask Mr. Dibble to come over. "Dibble can build an engine if need be," he remarked.

I sat down and awaited the coming of a sturdy, grimy-faced and brawny mechanic, such as those who so capably control the engine rooms of big steamers. The door opened and a slender, silken-socked youth,

with a blue cap cocked on his jaunty head, nodded to the superintendent. "Want me, do you?"

The superintendent waved one hand toward me. "This gentleman wants to engage an engineer for the *Lasy Lass* for an extended cruise. Will you take her?"

The young man looked at me and nodded. "A yacht? Give me the extras I ask for and I'm your man. Of course you pay the usual wages?"

"My friend, the owner, expects—er—expects a man of experience," I protested. "You see, it will be a long voyage and there is—er—a great deal of responsibility. Possibly an older man might—"

"There are no old men in the gasoline business," put in the superintendent. "I recommend Mr. Dibble here and—it's our machinery that he will run and it's to our advantage to have it in good hands. See?"

I saw. Mr. Dibble accepted a check from the superintendent, shook hands with him and cheerfully accompanied me out of the place. "When does the *Lasy Lass* sail?" he demanded, lighting a very good cigar.

"In four or five days," I murmured. "We will go and see the owner. Really, I think he intended to employ an older man; but I can't go back on your company's recommendation. Now it's up to the owner."

"Oh, I'm sport enough to take a chance," returned my debonaire companion, flicking a bit of ash from his coat lapel. "If he doesn't fancy me—and you never can tell what will strike the fancy of a plute—there's always a job ashore."

"If you could show a little experience on long trips I think it might help," I urged.

"Hell!" was the calm response. "I just came in from eleven months with 'Lord' Bates on the *Del Monte*."

"The whaler?"

"Whaler, sealer, sailor and dead-game sport," said Dibble. "That's why I'm broke and ready for another cruise. Not complaining, y'understand. It was a run for my money, all right, and Bates played fair. He cleaned us all out!"

"I heard——"

Amusement was in Dibble's glance at me. "Did you? Say, did you get the straight of it?"

"Of what?—the killing of——" I suggested darkly.

"No; I mean of the Great Arctic Handicap, as Bates called it."

"I didn't hear the yarn," I said, making for the Oakland ferryboat. "How was it?"

"Do you know Bates?"

I did; and there rose before my eyes the tall, sleek sinister figure that made heads twist on curious necks whenever he whom they term, in sardonic humour, "Lord" Bates passed along East Street. I had seen him several times during ten years and I recalled the spearlike glance of his eyes; the neat, mouselike ears that protruded slightly from under his brown, wavy hair; the small mouth, delicately curved over a cleft chin. I looked at Dibble and he responded with a sparkling smile. "I see you know him. Ever been a voyage with him?"

"Never!" I exclaimed with profound gratitude.

"I was his engineer this last trip," said the youth. "And he's a real sport—a soft winner and a game loser. But he don't often lose!"

My assent to this self-evident proposition was really needless, for Dibble drew his spotless trousers carefully over his knees on a continued blithely: "Bates seemed to cotton to me from the go. I went aboard after the *Del Monte* was fitted for sea, with her crew all tight in fore-castle and half deck. I guess 'Lord' Bates thought they were going to send him an engineer with grease in his hair and blisters on his thumbs. Anyway, he seemed surprized when I dropped down on him in the cabin and showed my papers. He looked at them and then shook my hand. 'Mr. Dibble, I'm glad to have a real gentleman on this trip with me. Make yourself at home,' he says. 'I think we'll get along together.'

"I'd heard something of Bates and I didn't expect to find him such a decent sort. You know the rough stories they tell about him. That night, when I'd gone over my machines and got everything ready for the start in the morning, I cleaned up and sat down under the cabin lamp to read a book. Bates came in and I reported that all was running sweetly, tanks filled, stores O K, and so on. He nodded and pulled a paper out of his pocket and spread it on the table. I saw it was the sporting edition of the *Bulletin*, with the dope sheet of Ingle-side Track. I butted right in. 'Who got in the fifth?' I asked him.

"Ingomar," says he.

"Well, I'd pretty near forgot it, but I'd put a piece of money on that horse and he'd romped in; and there I was, sitting in the cabin of the *Del Monte* with thirty-seven-fifty waiting for me at Sol's cigar stand. 'I suppose it'll be six months before I lay hands on that coin,' I remarks dolefully.

"I think we can leave the ship to the mate," he says, real pleasantly, 'while you and I go up and cash in. I won a little myself, Mr. Dibble.'

"So an hour later you could have seen us two in a grill uptown with a couple of bottles and broil between us.

"That made me square with the old man. Next morning the *Del Monte* chugged out of the Golden Gate and headed off for the other coast.

"For about six weeks I really had nothing to do. With a fair wind, Bates would shut down the engines and spread every rag the old schooner could carry while your humble servant sat and smoked good cigars. We made Yokohama, slipped up north to Hakodadi, where Bates did some fancy speling to the authorities and laid in a supply of oil casks, hit through the straits and entered the Okhotsk Sea. Well, we had good luck all right—and Bates knew his business. We'd left San Francisco in March and by July we'd pretty well filled up the hold with oil and bone. Then the old man gave orders to stow the whaling gear and clean up the rifles. You know what that meant—seals.

"By that time I'd got to know the crew pretty well. We carried forty fellows of every breed under the sun. The mate was a dull-looking squarehead, with the funniest way of using his fists you ever saw. At first I thought Bates had got stung on him, he seemed so blamed helpless about the deck. But no, sir! Ole Olson was the real

goods, hemmed on all four sides and guaranteed to rip and tear when needful. He could sail the schooner and lick four men at the same time without saying a word the while. Only he was a tiny bit rough. Bates had to call him down once. 'I never allow my officers to kill a man,' he says, with his nice smile. 'I'll do the killing myself.' And Ole, he got kind of white and sneaked off.

"The second mate was a Nova Scotian that we all called 'Airedale,' because 'Lord' Bates one day remarked that he looked like an Airedale terrier, all hair and long legs and ugliness. The third mate and chief harpooner was a Kanaka, a harmless duck, proud of his muscle and skill.

"I suppose Bates had picked the rest of his crew pretty carefully, from a remark he used to make evenings when the glare from the fire under the try-pots was showing them all up, half stripped and busy. 'A crew ought to be like a good engine—all fitted together and ready for brains to operate. I'm Brains in this outfit.'

"And he was—all but for one man, a young rancher from up country somewhere. Hill was his name, a strong, well-educated proper fellow. Bates told me one day why he took him along.

"I always like to observe the typical American under peculiar circumstances,' the old man told me. 'Now this Hill attracted my attention by his evident belief that he was plenty able to take care of himself anywhere. That appeals to me—that free and noble spirit. Hill appealed to me. I induced him to come along with us,' says Bates, with that queer little smile of his.

I'm anxious to see just how long his spirit will last. I have great faith in the American spirit. I'm an American myself. I bet on Mr. Hill.'

"Of course, that was just Bates' way of talking. As a matter of fact, Hill had been shanghaied and had had a hard time of it. Airedale, in whose watch he was, kept him jumping sideways till the fellow would get angry and try to lick somebody. Then Airedale and Ole would put him through the paces till Bates called them off. Hill never seemed to get wise. He was always coming up for more punishment; and I saw that, if he kept on, sooner or later he would run up against the old man himself. Then Mr. Hill would follow a couple of other foxy guys over the side and down to the bottom of the Okhotsk Sea. One day Bates warned him fairly enough.

"Hill," says he, real politely, 'you seem to think you are a mountain. Permit me

to call to your memory the fact that every mountain descends into a valley. There is one valley, Hill, where a wise man prays that he may fear no evil. Natural regret that you should pass through this valley, my dear Hill, would be tempered on my part by the circumstance that the twenty dollars a month you are drawing would accrue to me as residuary legatee. The longer the voyage the greater my consolation if anything should happen to you.'

"Bates, y'understand, threw on the style when he was good and mad; but Hill only looked up at him from where he lay on the deck and spit the blood out of his mouth.

"We cruised from La Pérouse Strait to Fox Island, hovering under the capes and running two and three hundred miles sometimes at a spurt to fool the gunboats that are always nosing around up there after poachers. It came September and time for us to be hiking home, but Bates didn't show any signs of being anxious; and it was none of our business, of course. I suspected he had designs on sea otter farther north and was waiting till the police vessels had run for winter quarters.

"But the crew didn't take into account Bates' plans. They got ugly very suddenly. Ole Olson and Airedale complained bitterly about the way things went. Bates would listen to them and cheer them up—and all the while he was nosing out a thing that none of us even thought of.

"We had slipped up the Arctic on an eddy of the Japan current and the old man, contrary to Hoyle, seemed bent on pushing still farther north instead of getting out while he could. Ole nearly went crazy between his fear of having to spend the winter in the ice and his terror of the old man. But it seems Bates had a plan—just the kind of plan that made him skipper and master of the toughest ships that ever spread canvas. We didn't know what that plan was till one night when the moon was riding full over an ice-capped island. Bates came up and sent for Hill.

"Hill had kept himself mighty close and quiet for a month. It looked odd to have him hauled aft. He came and Bates smiled at him. 'Mr. Hill,' says he, 'I thought you had brains. I'm glad to see you have. I admire brains. They have made our glorious America into the greatest nation on earth. Brains have always run the ships I've commanded. Heretofore, it has been my brains; but I see you are ambitious. I'm a sport, Mr. Hill, and I'd rather bet

on brains than muscle. I have a proposition to make to you.'

"By that time you can imagine that Ole and Airedale were ready to jump. Bates never talked that way unless something big was stirring behind those fine little ears of his. But he waved them back. 'If it was muscle or feet,' says he, 'I'd leave this matter to you gentlemen. But this is a question of brains and, if you'll excuse me, I'll handle this with Mr. Hill.'

"Hill came out of his trance. 'Since when have I been "Mister" on this packet?' he demands.

"'Since you took nine of my crew and made them conspire against me and my officers,' answered Bates.

"Hill said nothing, but I could see the shot went home. Bates took off his cap, as if he were warmed by the moonlight, and went on, 'I could easily fix you and your gallant nine by mere force of arms. But I have always indulged the true sporting spirit and this occurs to me as an excellent chance for a real test of brains versus muscle. I will bet my brains against yours, Mr. Hill.'

"We were puzzled, you can understand—didn't see what the old man was driving at. He made it plain that he knew Hill's scheme by going on to say: 'To-morrow the *Del Monte* is going north. We shall spend the winter in the lee of an island I'm acquainted with. We'll have six months to see which of us will take this schooner back to San Francisco and—get the money that's in her hold. Now, Mr. Hill, do you understand? If I win, you and your nine companions will—well, will not be with us on that happy day when the *Del Monte* pays off. It you win, I and my trusty friends here will not grace the Palace Hotel again—or the jail you intend for us.'

"Airedale saw through it first. His hairy fists closed up against his hips. 'See here, cap'n,' he growls; 'you just lemme settle this thing right here. I'll—'

"Bates turned on him. 'You'll either obey my orders or quit right here,' he snapped. 'If you want to sign clear, now's your chance.' He waved his hand over the grayish-white sea. Airedale took one look into the old man's eyes and turned away. I was pretty anxious myself, but Bates smiled at me and remarked: 'Mr. Dibble, Mr. Hill will need an engineer—and if he doesn't I shall need you.'

"White of him, wasn't it? And I'd have taken a chance too. That night at supper, which Bates always had served at eleven

o'clock, Ole had finally got it through his head that something was up. He tackled the old man. Bates laughed at him. 'To put the thing in first-reader language,' he explains, 'you and the second mate disobeyed my orders and we lost two men. I've stayed by you, for, after all, the fellows were bothersome—though I really think you were too rough with them. Then you start in on Hill, who has brains. Just at present Mr. Hill has nine men who will stick by him through thick and thin. If this vessel arrives in San Francisco with Mr. Hill and his men still on board you and the second mate will hang higher than any Christmas goose, for ten witnesses will convince any court that you committed murder. And I give Hill credit for picking the right men.'

"You ought to have seen those two mates weaving their thick fingers in and out over their plates. The old man was right. Hill had fixed them plenty. Airedale was the first to ask who were with Hill.

"'Irish Riordan; Ole's countryman, Nelson; that Dutch chap, Gross; the two dagos, Rivetti and Mancha, and the two Kanaka harpooners. The carpenter, Macgregor, is with him too.'

"'Who's the ninth?' asked Olsen presently, after reckoning on his stubby fingers.

"'Exercise your brains on that problem,' says Bates, and he wouldn't answer another question.

"You can imagine how we of the after-guard figured the thing over the next week while the *Del Monte* went north, along icy islands and through straits piled high with snowy slush. It was clear as water that Hill had the upper hand so far. The *Del Monte* didn't dare stick her nose into a civilized port so long as Hill and his men were ready to go and swear the officers' lives away. Olson was sure that Bates was going to some place where it would be possible to fix Hill and his crowd. 'I've sailed with the old man before,' says the mate. 'He ain't the man for trials and investigations and trouble ashore. I've heard him say, if he can't come into port with all peaceful for'ad and aft, he ain't coming in.'

"Airedale chirped up. 'If them ten men don't turn up on payday that'll mean a good thousand dollars apiece extra for us,' he says.

"It was the twenty-fifth of October when the *Del Monte* pushed her way through the shore ice and into the mouth of a little creek that ran down the side of a small rocky

island. 'Here's where we lie,' says Bates, and he told me to unship the propellers and take down the engines and fix them for winter.

"I didn't know then how shrewdly he had chosen the spot for winter quarters; but it proved to be pretty well protected; and there was some game, mostly seal and walrus, with a few foxes on a bigger island across a narrow strait.

"The old man didn't lose a day, but divided the crew into three parties for hunting. He kept them busy from daylight till dark. Ole Olson was in charge of one party, the Kanaka third mate of another, and Hill of still a third. Airedale stayed aboard the schooner, sulking around and keeping the decks clear of ice.

"By this time the whole crew knew that Hill was up to something. Bates never turned a hair, but merely saw to it that Hill always took at least one other man besides his own crowd when he went hunting. At first I thought the old man was crazy to trust him with guns and men. Then I realized that our harbour was a thousand miles from the nearest settlement and the only chance of safety was to seize the schooner or stay with her.

"I've talked with several fellows who've spent a winter up north and I never saw one that didn't swear at the mere thought of it. But Bates was a wizard. He knew all the tricks to keep a crew good-humoured. He got up all sorts of good games and allowed Airedale to make a small 'book' on them. We had music and yarns at night, four meals a day and work enough besides. Even when the real winter came down and the best light we had was a kind of miserable moonshine, the *Del Monte* was a busy place. Once in a while the old man himself would loosen up with stories on the main deck—the kind that make you chuckle. He was a born actor, that man; and you never saw a handsomer, softer-spoken chap in your life than he was those long days.

"The Irishman, Riordan, caught Airedale cheating him one night on some bets made on an obstacle race over the hummocky ice. I suppose the second mate thought he might as well make a little on the side and never guessed that the Irishman would kick. Riordan hit out and smashed Airedale flat to the deck and would have finished him if it hadn't been for Ole. Bates came on deck at sound of the ruction, asked two questions and drove Riordan forward of the foremast. Then he fined Airedale twenty dollars. 'Don't try

to use your head,' he jollied the poor Nova Scotian. But that ended our real fun.

"It was February and we all knew that sooner or later Bates would start to clean the ship. That was the expression he used: 'Clean the ship.' By April we could expect a clear lead out to open water. What was the old man going to do in March?

"March came; and it was published round the schooner that the total profits of the voyage would make over twenty-five thousand dollars, with the few otter skins we'd skimmed off Japanese waters. That made a little over four hundred dollars for each man for'ad. After this had soaked in and the boys had counted their money over a dozen times, and imagined what they would do with it when they got paid in San Francisco, it was mentioned by Ole Olson that the old man thought he carried too big a crew. You know what that means. The men knew.

"It meant that, if only twenty men paid off in the city, each man would get his own share and the share of one of the twenty that didn't turn up. I guess Bates thought that would fix Hill and his nine men.

"But Hill was too smart to be tripped that way. He got his fellows together quietly and explained that it was a sure thing they would be the first to go over-side. He put it to them straight: Death or take the schooner. They all knew Bates. They stayed with Hill.

"The old man found it out, of course, for he made the remark at table that Hill was a clever youth. It didn't seem to disturb him that he couldn't get the nine men by the ears.

"Airedale was thoroughly scared and he brought up the subject of what story was to be told when we got back to the city. 'We sailed with forty men for'ad,' says he. 'We get back with two dozen. There'll be an investigation.'

"There will not,' says Bates. 'The Kanakas naturally wanted to get back home. They were paid off in Japan. That accounts for five. Two others were lost off the main yard. A dory was lost with—well, with as many more as we need!' He smiled at Airedale, as much as to say: 'Brains are what you lack.'

"Then we knew that, when the *Del Monte* got clear and started down the sea, Hill and his friends would be sent off in dories for seal or otter. Easy money! But Hill surely knew the scheme. What would he do? It would have to come down to a rough-and-tumble battle between Bates and

his outfit and Hill and his nine men. Such scraps never end so easily as they are begun. I wondered at Bates being so cool. One bullet in the right place—and all that, you know.

"But Bates was a sport. As he said, he was betting on brains.

"With the first days of April came heavy storms which filled the creek where we lay with a freshet that poured round the schooner like a mill tail. Two weeks of this and the floe that held us in was crowding out, leaving us free. On April eighteenth Bates called me into his room. 'Get your machines ready,' he told me. He agreed that we would wait a while before shipping the propellers, for fear of their being broken in the ice. 'We'll need those engines mighty badly pretty soon,' he said. Of course everybody pitched in cheerfully to get the *Del Monte* ready for sea again. Once clear of our little harbour and four weeks would see us in San Francisco. Even Hill seemed to forget his troubles.

"We warped the schooner out of the creek and into open water. Bates beamed on us when another day saw us nosing out under easy sail into the smother of chunks and bergs that marked the passage. Then we shipped the screws and managed to make a hundred miles in a week. By that time we were skirting an immense field of ice that stretched northward clear to the mainland, I suppose. Farther out was another field, which Bates said would soon break up. Between them there was a good lead, which we followed, now sticking close to one field, then reaching over toward the other.

"When I finally started my engines full speed ahead it was a fine night and the *Del Monte* slipped along through the black water with hardly a sound. A slice of moon lay in the west, like a bit of orange peel on the floor of the floe. The watch was busy making things snug on deck. Bates was scanning the icefield with his night glasses. Suddenly he turned to Ole and said: 'I really believe those are otter over there.'

"The mate took a look and agreed. 'I guess they'll get clear,' he says.

"'Get away?' says the old man. 'Those skins are worth eight hundred dollars apiece.' And he sent for Airedale. He told the Nova Scotian to clear a boat and pick out some of the best shots in the crew—and fetch the otter. Then he rang my engines down and moored the schooner to the edge of the floe.

"Airedale soon got his boat's crew together and started off down the lead to round up the otter, as the old man had told him to make a long détour. When he'd been gone twenty minutes Bates told Hill and half a dozen others to climb down on the ice and go for the animals from the other side. 'There's four thousand or five thousand dollars loafing on that hummock,' he remarked. The men scrambled to be off.

"In half an hour the moon was gone and only the dim stars shone down on the floe. We heard a few scattering shots in the distance. Half an hour later Airedale's boat came back, was swung up and its crew went forward. I was smoking by the booby hatch, with Bates close by. He called the second mate over. 'Did you bring back all the guns?' he inquired.

"'All but one,' Airedale growled. 'Hill caught on before I got his. Soon as he saw that there cabin boy he was wise.'

"'And you got your own men back in the boat and left Mr. Hill and his?'

"'Yes, sir, I did,' says Airedale, and heaved a big sigh of relief. 'But why did you send that idiot of a boy off, sir?'

"'Because Mr. Hill is a clever chap,' says the old man gently. Then he turned to me. 'Mr. Dibble, if you will kindly warm up your engines again, I think we'll be moving along—toward home.'

"That's all there was to that. I didn't get wise to it all then, but I quickly found out what had been done. The otter were seals, come up to breathe. Airedale had taken some of Hill's men in his boat and Bates had seen to it that the rest of the nine went with their leader across the floe. They shot the seals, of course; then Airedale picked up the rifles and gear and sent his own men, whom Bates had told him to trust, back to the small boat with them, telling Hill and the others to skin the seals and bring the pelts across the ice to the schooner. When Hill and his crowd got back to where they had left the *Del Monte* she wasn't there. The ten of 'em were on a thousand-mile icefield, without boat, food or fire. Neat scheme, wasn't it?

"We ran full speed for half an hour and then Bates told me to keep the engines barely turning. 'I reckon you had better catch forty winks now and then,' he remarked. 'I'll ring the gong when I need more power.'

"I shut them down and went on deck. The crew, what was left of them, were huddled forward. Ole was on watch. The old man had turned in. Yes, sir, gone to

bed! When I found that out I knew he was the real McCoy—the genuine article—the biggest man I ever sailed with. Ole chuckled in my ear. 'They're coming along. You could have heard them yelling a while back,' he said.

"The next morning we were still going dead slow, about a quarter of a mile off the big floe. At sunrise I saw Bates smiling over his binoculars. A mile astern of us ten men were tramping along over hummocks and ridges, trying to catch up with us. 'That fellow Hill is a smart man,' Bates said to me, his eyes dancing. 'I'll bet on him every time.'

"I guess I looked a little pale, for the old man smiled more than ever. 'I observe that you see their predicament,' he told me. 'I'll admit that this seems like a strenuous measure, Mr. Dibble. But Mr. Hill must learn that Lord Bates is the wrong man to fool with—or bluff. Then'—he leaned across the wheelbox confidentially—'we have a very interesting problem worked out before us. There are ten men who know that their only hope of living is to get back on the deck of this schooner. There are several gentlemen on this schooner who know that it's the gallows for them if the ten get here. Nobody ever beat me at my own game. It's my deal and they've all got to play their hands as they lie. What do you suppose Mr. Hill will do?'

"By George! I saw it. After all, Hill and his gang had brought this trouble on themselves. You couldn't blame Bates. It was a big game we were playing in. 'I'll bet on your hand,' I told him.

"All that day we kept just ahead of those poor devils. They stopped now and again to consult. Once three of them started off by themselves and we saw Hill go after them and chase them back. Bates was watching the affair through his glasses. I can hear him chuckle yet and say: 'Those three chaps have the seal meat. Now who but Hill would have known enough to bring that along? Those would-be deserters can thank him for saving them—for a little while. It's three hundred miles to the nearest land and that floe will start breaking up in two weeks.'

"By sundown we had logged twenty-nine miles from the place where Hill had been set ashore. Bates stopped the engines with the remark that we would drift along before a light breeze and give the fellows out there a rest.

"Next morning they were opposite us. A cold, nasty wind was blowing in their

faces. They were pretty nearly all in. Bates sent the *Del Monte* on at quarter speed.

"At noon the old man ran the schooner up to the edge of the ice and waited for the little huddle a mile back. When he saw that it would be some time before they caught up he put out an anchor on the floe—and I, for one, thought he had decided to let up on them. By this time they would certainly be willing to make any bargain, just to get back. They thought it was their chance too. When they got within a quarter of a mile, and saw the schooner made fast, they broke into a run and the huddle tailed out like horses in the third quarter.

"First came a couple of Kanakas, leaping and waving their arms like madmen. Then the two Italians, yelling. Gross and Nelson were stumbling behind them. Macgregor, the carpenter, was trying to find a short cut over a ridge of crumpled ice. Riordan and Hill were last, dragging between them the silly idiot of a steward, a boy whom Airedale had always enjoyed punishing and ragging.

"The Kanakas got within a hundred yards of us when Ole snatched the anchor aboard and the *Del Monte* swung back into the channel. There she hung while those poor devils crowded to the edge of the floe. Bates ordered the engines ahead and we went on. The two Kanakas saw the curl of water under the counter and dove in and swam like good fellows. The old man watched them a while and then hauled a mile out, as the wind was rising again.

"That night, while we lay hove to, Ole Olson thumped the table and swore that another day would end the ten. Bates took him up. 'How much will you bet?'

"Olson would bet a hundred dollars. The old man smiled. 'I'm a real sport myself,' he said. 'As I dealt this hand I guess it's up to me to bet on it. I'll take all wagers, either way, across the board or up and down. But first I'll fix my book.'

"Inside of an hour he came out of his room with a regular sheet, names of the ten all down and odds set against each man's number. He pinned the sheet to the bulkhead and we looked it over. At the top was written in big letters:

GREAT ARCTIC HANDICAP

"Halfway down was a long-odds schedule, where you could figure the price on how many days before the last man gave out. He banked on Hill both ways.

"Inside of ten minutes we were all in on it. Airedale put up a hundred that twenty-four hours more would see the last of them and bet another hundred that Riordan would be the last to give up. Ole bet his pile on Nelson, and Bates smiled. 'That's right; stick up for your countryman,' says he.

"An hour later news of the book had got forward and the men sent the cook to find out whether they mightn't get in on it. The old man said, 'Sure!' and the hands came aft two at a time and signed releases on their lays and wages for the money to put up. I'll never forget that night, with the wind howling over us and the icy brine washing down the companionway as the men tramped in, and the skipper taking their bets as cool as you please on whether the men out there on the floe would last a day or two days or three—and who would be the last man in sight!

"Next morning was thick. Bates edged the schooner over to the icefield and hung along it for an hour or so, but we saw nobody. When it cleared away that afternoon we saw a little group ahead of us. We ran up. The two Kanakas were missing. Bates called their countrymen aft. 'You boys are broke,' he told them.

"Airedale had lost a hundred and he was sore; but the fact that Riordan was still up and going, with another hundred on him, cheered him a little. He dug down and bet some more on the Irishman.

"That night the betting was livelier than ever. Bates increased the odds on Hill. 'I'll risk my money on brains—good American brains,' he joked. And, when the crew tumbled to the fact that the old man was backing Hill simply because he was an American, every man-Jack of them put his money on his countryman, even to the Portuguese cook, who wagered his whole lay on the two dagos, Bates dividing the bet to favour him.

"When the skipper dropped down into my engine room that night I could see he felt pretty good. 'There's over six thousand dollars in the pot,' he told me. 'That makes it interesting. It's the total wages of the entire crew. A bully lot of sports I've got, my son,' he went on. 'I do like the proper spirit.'

"As he had my money in three pieces—one on Nelson, one on a limit of five days more and one on the Irishman—at good odds, I felt pretty easy, thinking I'd covered myself up safely. But I was up with the rest of the early birds in the morning, for it

was clear and cold and it was a certainty that some bets would be decided before dark.

"Bates had kept the *Del Monte* close up to the edge of the field all night, with her lights showing clear. At sunrise seven men were lurching along the floe. Away back—two miles, I guess—a little black spot on a snowheap showed where Gross, the German, had fallen down for good. The rest were making it very slowly, Hill just behind them, with his rifle across his arm. They weren't far off and we could see that there wasn't much left to any of them. The two Italians were the worst. One of them fell while we were looking at him. Airedale suddenly burst out in a laugh, the first I ever heard from him and the queerest rusty bellow you can imagine.

"There were five that evening at sundown—Hill, Riordan, the cabin boy, Nelson and Macgregor. The rest of 'em were lying down along the eight miles we had made that day. Bates sent the *Del Monte* full speed two miles more and ahead of the survivors and tied up to a projecting spur of ice. Olson thought it was too close to be safe, but Bates smiled. 'I'm betting on brains,' he said.

"Sure enough, Hill had figured out exactly what the old man was doing. He knew that Bates would never steam away till the last man had tumbled down. So he made his crowd all lie down in a hollow and sleep, huddled together to keep from freezing. That sleep of theirs cost the bettors on the schooner three thousand dollars, for it gave the five strength enough to hold out a day longer than they could have done otherwise, though it froze most of the fingers and toes in the outfit.

"The next day all hands kept the deck, watching the procession along the floe and betting between one another. I think Bates was a little bored, for he speeded the schooner to a good three knots and the way those half-dead crow-baits managed to keep the pace was a lesson in what men will do just to live one more day of misery. But that afternoon the cabin boy died and Hill dropped behind to look after him, I suppose. Anyway, at dark, Hill hadn't come up and wasn't to be seen. So the old man stopped again for the night, though Olson openly grumbled that it wasn't fair, as the skipper stood to win everything on Hill—or lose.

"If Mr. Hill isn't up here by daylight,' says Bates, very coldly, 'we'll go on; but this is fair play.'

"Sure enough, sunrise saw Hill once more

on the trail, with Riordan and Nelson. Macgregor was gone and Airedale consequently cleaned out. It made him so furious that he tried to pot Hill with a rifle from behind the longboat. He managed to knock Nelson over. At sound of the shots Bates jumped on deck and saw what the second mate had been up to. He called him aft—and I swear Airedale seemed half-dead himself, his hairy face all twisted and his fingers curling; but the old man merely said: 'Your excellent aim has cost Mr. Olson, Nelson's backer, just one thousand dollars.'

"Olson couldn't get it through his head, at first, what had happened. When he thoroughly understood, the old man remarked in his iciest tones: 'You and the second mate will wait till you get ashore before you settle your little difficulty. I want no fighting here.' That was enough, of course; but Airedale took care to keep an eye on Olson after that.

"The next day was the nastiest of the voyage—a perfectly dense storm of sleet. In the morning the floe lay before us in a fresh coat of frosting, but there was nothing moving on it, though we could see for miles along the edge, owing to a deep bight. Bates anchored and we all stared and spied till our sight wore out. That night the crew wanted the book closed and the bets paid. The old man refused. 'I'll count this the last day, unless one of them turns up,' he said. 'But I'm going to be sure. This race is a bona-fide proposition.'

"As there was considerable of a moon by this time, we steamed along the early part of the night, keeping close to the icefield. I think everybody was on deck, for there was plenty of money hung up on whether Hill or the Irishman survived. Bates was loafing abaft the wheel-box, night glasses in hand. Airedale was on watch and Olson gloomed over the rail, smoking. It was so light that one could see the faces of the men along the main-deck bulwarks.

"Suddenly there was a crack and Olson jerked his head over his shoulder and fell to the deck. Airedale ran across and stooped over him to straighten up with a yell 'He's been shot!'

"Bates never moved—and before the second mate could say another word he pitched over himself, clawing at the air, with a big seal-rifle ball between his eyes. I heard just one sentence from the old man's lips—to the helmsman: 'Keep her closer in!'

"The *Del Monte* slid over toward the

shining ice and rounded to not fifty yards from a man who was standing stiffly on a hummock, rifle across his arm. It was Hill.

"Bates stepped to the rail, as pretty a target as ever you saw in the full moonlight. He said nothing. He merely smiled across at Hill.

"I'd stopped the engines and, as the schooner swung a little, Hill croaked out: 'Do you want a mate, captain?'

"The old man smiled like a boy. 'You're just in time, Mr. Hill,' he called over. 'I've just lost two mates.'

"When Hill stumbled aboard—and he had to be helped, for his feet were frozen—he was all but dead to look at. His face was black and his eyes were sunken in till you could hardly see the glint of them. He managed to walk up the steps to the quarter deck. There he stood, balancing himself almost over Airedale's body. Bates was a few feet away, looking as pleased as Punch. 'You are the winner of the Great Arctic Handicap!' he announced. 'I'm glad that this race was won by an American. I am sorry that Mr. Olson and the second mate could not have known the outcome.'

"Hill looked down at Airedale's hairy form and croaked: 'Do you think he would have laughed so loudly again?'

"The second mate was not what you might call a brainy chap,' said the old man pleasantly. Then he turned to me with: 'Mr. Dibble, will you please see what speed you can get out of those engines? I must be in San Francisco in seventeen days. Mr. Hill, will you take Mr. Olson's cabin? Thank you.'

"That's 'Lord' Bates, the gamest sport that ever sailed a ship."

"It strikes me that our friend Hill had nerve too," I ventured to remark.

"Oh, yes!" said the capable young engineer as we got up to leave the boat. "Hill was game. When he could toddle around the old man happened to ask him one day when and where Riordan had given up. Hill looked Bates right in the eye. 'He tried to get the gun away from me,' he said.

"That tickled the old man. 'Brains always win,' he said. I guess they do. Anyway, Hill got Olson's share of the money and I lost eleven months' wages. Now, if I can land this job on the *Lazy Lass*—"

I assured him that the owner of that excellent ship would hire him instantly at the highest wages.



Remembered from the Play

“THE SPORT OF KINGS”

AMOS PURDIE, P. J.—Do you realize that I have fallen into the sin of betting and gambling; and, what is worse, I was found out?

By Major Ian Hay Beith, New York, 1926.

“YOUNG WOODLEY”

LAURA—Love is the most beautiful thing in the world—and it is so often wasted.

SIMMONS—Are you in love with that boy, perhaps?

LAURA—You said that was impossible.

SIMMONS—But women are unaccountable. *By John Van Druten, New York, 1925.*

“THE KILLING OF A GENERAL IN CHINA”

MAX MORAL—If it's true that one's conscience always agrees with one's religion, console yourself. Christ said: “Love your neighbour as yourself.” But he didn't mention people living so far away.

By Gino Rocca, Milan, 1925.

“THE TRIAL OF JESUS”

LONGINUS, a centurion—If a man believes anything up to the point of dying on the cross for it, he will find others to believe it.

PILATE—What is truth? What you will give your life for. But men will give their lives for any folly and any lie. Yet what you give your life for must be a shadow of truth.

HEROD—Man's purpose is life, and it must be evident to everybody that he was never intended to think.

By John Masefield, Oxford, 1925.

“THE DYBBUK”

MESSENGER—I'll tell you one of his proverbs. One day a Chassid came to the Rabbi—he was rich, but a miser. The Rabbi took him by the hand and led him to the window. “Look out there,” he said. And the rich man looked into the street. “What do you see?” asked the Rabbi. “People,” answers the rich man. Again the Rabbi takes him by the hand, and this time leads him to the mirror. “What do you see now?” he says. “Now I see myself,” answers the rich man. Then the Rabbi says: “Behold—in the window there is glass and in the mirror there is glass. But the glass of the mirror is covered with a little silver, and no sooner is the silver added than you cease to see others, but see only yourself.”

By S. Ansky, Moscow, 1922, New York, 1925.

BLONDES PREFER BRACELETS

DOROTHY—A kiss on the hand makes you feel very good, but a diamond bracelet lasts forever.

"Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" by Anita Loos; dramatized by John Emerson, Detroit, 1926.

"IOLANTHE"

PHYLLIS—We won't wait long.

STREPHON—No: we might change our minds. We'll get married first.

PHYLLIS—And change our minds afterwards?

STREPHON—That's the usual course.

PRIVATE WILLIS—I often think it's comical—Fal, la-la, la! Fal, la-la, la!

How Nature always does contrive—Fal, la-la, la-la!

That ev'ry boy and ev'ry gal

That's born into the world alive,

Is either a little Liberal,

Or else a little Conservative!

Fal, la-la, la! Fal, la-la, la!

By W. S. Gilbert, London (1882), Revived, New York, 1926.

"WHAT EVERY WOMAN KNOWS"

MAGGIE—I've sometimes thought, John, that the difference between us and the English is that the Scotch are hard in all other respects but soft with women, and the English are hard with women and soft in all other respects.

JOHN—You've forgotten the grandest moral attribute of a Scotsman, Maggie, that he'll do nothing which might damage his career.

ALICK—What is charm, exactly, Maggie?

MAGGIE—Oh, it's—it's a sort of bloom on a woman. If you have it, you don't need to have anything else; and if you don't have it, it doesn't matter much what else you have. Some women, the few, have charm for all; and most have charm for one. But some have charm for none. By J. M. Barrie, London, 1908. Revived, New York, 1926.

"THE WEB OF PENELOPE"

ULYSSES—Yes; and, moreover, I have learned to love things and beings and places, without being faithful to them. The world is faithful to too many things; that is why it is so sad and old. Everything lives by reasoning instead of feeling. Men are the slaves of an infinity of ideas which they do not understand. They play, on a larger scale, the puny little game of ripping out by night what they have woven by day. Beauty is a part of life itself, old man, not merely of wisdom.

ULYSSES (*To the dancer Asteria, the courtesan*)—We find someone who gives us pleasure. Someone who will offer us the cup of eternal youth as unstintingly as the innkeeper offers us a cup of wine. We don't have to pay with our souls. We are not obliged to pay for pleasure with pain, with jealousy. The gift of a bauble settles our account. But those other women get in our way, they steal part of our lives, they rob us of our freedom. You don't.

By Raffaele Calsini, Milan, 1925.

"A HUSBAND IN LOVE"

MARK—You take everything too seriously: life, love . . . even women. That is why your colour is like that of an unsatisfied creditor. You are a statue of disillusion; always in danger—between your heart and your mouth. You offer your heart to get her lips, while a woman would gladly give you her lips . . . she doesn't know what to do with a heart. It is neither a bracelet, a fur coat, nor a sixty horsepower motor. Heart is a dish of which woman desires no second helping.

Alessandro Baraldi, Milan, 1925.

The Honour of the Name

By ÉMILE GABORIAU

Being a Sequel to "Monsieur Lecoq"

CHAPTER XLVII



ALL the persons who witnessed Baron d'Escorval's terrible fall, the *abbé* was the only one who did not despair. What a learned doctor would not have dared to do, he did.

He was a priest; he had faith. He remembered the sublime saying of Ambroise Paré: "I dress the wound: God heals it."

After a six months' sojourn in Father Poignot's secluded farmhouse, M. d'Escorval was able to sit up and to walk about a little, with the aid of crutches.

Then he began to be seriously inconvenienced by his cramped quarters in the loft, where prudence compelled him to remain; and it was with transports of joy that he welcomed the idea of taking up his abode at the *Borderie* with Marie-Anne.

When the day of departure had been decided upon, he counted the minutes as impatiently as a school-boy pining for vacation.

"I am suffocating here," he said to his wife. "I am suffocating. Time drags so slowly. When will the happy day come?"

It came at last. During the morning all the articles which they had succeeded in procuring during their stay at the farmhouse were collected and packed; and when night came, Poignot's son began the moving.

"Everything is at the *Borderie*," said the honest fellow, on returning from his last trip, "and Mademoiselle Lacheneur bids the baron bring a good appetite."

"I shall have one, never fear!" responded the baron, gayly. "We shall all have one."

Father Poignot himself was busily engaged in harnessing his best horse to the cart which was to convey M. d'Escorval to his new home.

The worthy man's heart grew sad at the thought of the departure of these guests, for whose sake he had incurred such danger. He felt that he should miss them, that the

house would seem gloomy and deserted after they left it.

He would allow no one else to perform the task of arranging the mattress comfortably in the cart. When this had been done to his satisfaction, he heaved a deep sigh, and exclaimed:

"It is time to start!"

Slowly he ascended the narrow staircase leading to the loft.

M. d'Escorval had not thought of the moment of parting.

At the sight of the honest farmer, who came toward him, his face crimsoned with emotion to bid him farewell, he forgot all the comforts that awaited him at the *Borderie*, in the remembrance of the loyal and courageous hospitality he had received in the house he was about to leave. The tears sprang to his eyes.

"You have rendered me a service which nothing can repay, Father Poignot," he said, with intense feeling. "You have saved my life."

"Oh! we will not talk of that, Baron. In my place, you would have done the same—neither more nor less."

"I shall not attempt to express my thanks, but I hope to live long enough to prove that I am not ungrateful."

The staircase was so narrow that they had considerable difficulty in carrying the baron down; but finally they had him comfortably extended upon his mattress and threw over him a few handfuls of straw, which concealed him entirely.

"Farewell, then!" said the old farmer, when the last handshake had been exchanged, "or rather *au revoir*, Monsieur le Baron, Madame, and you, my good *curé*."

"All ready?" inquired young Poignot.

"Yes," replied the invalid.

The cart, driven with the utmost caution by the young peasant, started slowly on its way.

Mme. d'Escorval, leaning upon the

abbé's arm, walked about twenty paces in the rear.

It was very dark, but had it been as light as day the former *curé* of Sairmeuse might have encountered any of his old parishioners without the least danger of detection.

His hair and his beard had been allowed to grow; his tonsure had entirely disappeared, and his sedentary life had caused him to become much stouter. He was clad like all the well-to-do peasants of the neighbourhood, and his face was hidden by a large slouch hat.

He had not felt so tranquil in mind for months. Obstacles which had appeared almost insurmountable had vanished. In the near future he saw the baron declared innocent by impartial judges; he saw himself re-installed in the presbytery of Sairmeuse.

The recollection of Maurice was the only thing that marred his happiness. Why did he not give some sign of life?

"But if he had met with any misfortune we should have heard of it," thought the priest. "He has with him a brave man—an old soldier who would risk anything to come and tell us."

He was so absorbed in these thoughts that he did not observe that Mme. d'Escorval was leaning more and more heavily upon his arm.

"I am ashamed to confess it," she said at last, "but I can go no farther. It has been so long since I was out of doors that I have almost forgotten how to walk."

"Fortunately, we are almost there," replied the priest.

A moment after young Poignot stopped his cart in the road, at the entrance of the little footpath leading to the Borderie.

"Our journey is ended!" he remarked to the baron. Then he uttered a low whistle, like that which he had given a few hours before, to warn Marie-Anne of his arrival.

No one appeared; he whistled again, louder this time; then with all his might—still no response.

Mme. d'Escorval and the abbé had now overtaken the cart.

"It is very strange that Marie-Anne does not hear me," remarked young Poignot, turning to them. "We cannot take the baron to the house until we have seen her. She knows that very well. Shall I run up and warn her?"

"She is asleep, perhaps," replied the abbé; "you stay with your horse, my boy, and I will go and wake her."

Certainly he did not feel the slightest

disquietude. All was calm and still; a bright light was shining through the windows of the second story.

Still, when he saw the open door, a vague presentiment of evil stirred his heart.

"What can this mean?" he thought.

There was no light in the lower rooms, and the abbé was obliged to feel for the staircase with his hands.

At last he found it and went up. But upon the threshold of the chamber he paused, petrified with horror by the spectacle before him.

Poor Marie-Anne was lying on the floor. Her eyes, which were wide open, were covered with a white film; her black and swollen tongue was hanging from her mouth.

"Dead!" faltered the priest, "dead!"

But this could not be. The abbé conquered his weakness, and approaching the poor girl, he took her hand.

It was icy cold; the arm was rigid as iron. "Poisoned!" he murmured; "poisoned with arsenic."

He rose to his feet, and cast a bewildered glance around the room. His eyes fell upon his medicine-chest, open upon the table.

He rushed to it and unhesitatingly took out a vial, uncorked it, and inverted it on the palm of his hand—it was empty.

"I was not mistaken!" he exclaimed.

But he had no time to lose in conjectures.

The first thing to be done was to induce the baron to return to the farmhouse without telling him the terrible misfortune which had occurred.

To find a pretext was easy enough.

The priest hastened back to the wagon, and with well-affected calmness told the baron that it would be impossible for him to take up his abode at the Borderie at present, that several suspicious-looking characters had been seen prowling about, and that they must be more prudent than ever, now they could rely upon the kindly intervention of Martial de Sairmeuse.

At last, but not without considerable reluctance, the baron yielded.

"You desire it, *curé*," he sighed, "so I obey. Come, Poignot, my boy, take me back to your father's house."

Mme. d'Escorval took a seat in the cart beside her husband; the priest watched them as they drove away, and not until the sound of their carriage-wheels had died away in the distance did he venture to go back to the Borderie.

He was ascending the stairs when he heard moans that seemed to issue from the chamber of death. The sound sent all the

blood wildly rushing to his heart. He darted up the staircase.

A man was kneeling beside Marie-Anne, weeping bitterly. The expression of his face, his attitude, his sobs betrayed the wildest despair. He was so lost in grief that he did not observe the *abbé's* entrance.

Who was this mourner who had found his way to the house of death?

After a moment, the priest divined who the intruder was, though he did not recognize him.

"Jean!" he cried, "Jean Lacheneur!"

With a bound the young man was on his feet, pale and menacing; a flame of anger drying the tears in his eyes.

"Who are you?" he demanded, in a harsh voice. "What are you doing here? What do you wish with me?"

By his peasant dress and by his long beard, the former *curé* of Sairmeuse was so effectually disguised that he was obliged to tell who he really was.

As soon as he uttered his name, Jean uttered a cry of joy.

"God has sent you here!" he exclaimed. "Marie-Anne cannot be dead! You, who have saved so many others, will save her."

As the priest sadly pointed to heaven, Jean paused, his face more ghastly than before. He understood now that there was no hope.

"Ah!" he murmured, with an accent of utmost despondency, "fate shows us no mercy. I have been watching over Marie-Anne, though from a distance; and this very evening I was coming to say to her: 'Beware, sister—be cautious!'"

"What! you knew——"

"I knew she was in great danger; yes, Monsieur. An hour ago, while I was eating my supper in a restaurant at Sairmeuse, Grollet's son entered. 'Is this you, Jean?' said he. 'I just saw Chupin hiding near your sister's house; when he observed me he slunk away.' I ran here like one crazed. But when fate is against a man, what can he do? I came too late!"

The *abbé* reflected for a moment.

"Then you suppose that it was Chupin?"

"I do not suppose, sir; I swear that it was he—the miserable traitor!—who committed this foul deed."

"Still, what motive could he have had?"

Jean burst into one of those discordant laughs that are, perhaps, the most poignant signs of despair.

"You may rest assured that the blood of the daughter will yield him a richer reward than did the father's. Chupin has

been the vile instrument; but it was not he who conceived the crime. You will have to seek higher for the culprit, much higher, in the finest château of the country, in the midst of an army of valets at Sairmeuse, in short!"

"Wretched man, what do you mean?"

"What I say."

And coldly, he added:

"Martial de Sairmeuse is the assassin."

The priest recoiled, really appalled by the looks and manner of the grief-stricken man.

"You are mad!" he said, severely.

But Jean gravely shook his head.

"If I seem so to you, sir," he replied, "it is only because you are ignorant of Martial's wild passion for Marie-Anne. He wished to make her his mistress. She had the audacity to refuse this honour; that was a crime for which she must be punished. When the Marquis de Sairmeuse became convinced that Lacheneur's daughter would never be his, he poisoned her that she might not belong to another."

Any attempt to convince Jean of the folly of his accusation would have been vain at that moment. No proofs would have convinced him. He would have closed his eyes to all evidence.

"To-morrow, when he is more calm, I will reason with him," thought the *abbé*; then, turning to Jean, he said:

"We cannot allow the body of the poor girl to remain here upon the floor. Assist me, and we will place it upon the bed."

Jean trembled from head to foot, and his hesitation was apparent.

"Very well!" he said, at last, after a severe struggle.

No one had ever slept upon this bed which poor Chanlouineau had destined for Marie-Anne.

"It shall be for her," he said to himself, "or for no one."

And it was Marie-Anne who rested there first—dead.

When this sad task was accomplished, he threw himself into the same arm-chair in which Marie-Anne had breathed her last, and with his face buried in his hands, and his elbows supported upon his knees, he sat there as silent and motionless as the statues of sorrow placed above the last resting-places of the dead.

The *abbé* knelt at the head of the bed and began the recital of the prayers for the dead, entreating God to grant peace and happiness in heaven to her who had suffered so much upon earth.

But he prayed only with his lips. In spite of his efforts, his mind would persist in wandering.

He was striving to solve the mystery that enshrouded Marie-Anne's death. Had she been murdered? Could it be that she had committed suicide?

This explanation recurred to him, but he could not believe it.

But, on the other hand, how could her death possibly be the result of a crime?

He had carefully examined the room, and he had discovered nothing that betrayed the presence of a stranger.

All that he could prove was, that his vial of arsenic was empty, and that Marie-Anne had been poisoned by the *bouillon*, a few drops of which were left in the bowl that was standing upon the mantel.

"When daylight comes," thought the *abbé*, "I will look outside."

When morning broke, he went into the garden, and made a careful examination of the premises.

At first he saw nothing that gave him the least clew, and was about to abandon the investigations, when, upon entering the little grove, he saw in the distance a large dark stain upon the grass. He went nearer—it was blood!

Much excited, he summoned Jean, to inform him of the discovery.

"Someone has been assassinated here," said Lacheneur; "and it happened last night, for the blood has not had time to dry."

"The victim lost a great deal of blood," the priest remarked; "it might be possible to discover who he was by following up these stains."

"I am going to try," responded Jean. "Go back to the house, sir; I will soon return."

A child might have followed the track of the wounded man, the blood-stains left in his passage were so frequent and so distinct.

These tell-tale marks stopped at Chupin's house. The door was closed; Jean rapped without the slightest hesitation.

The old poacher's eldest son opened the door, and Jean saw a strange spectacle.

The traitor's body had been thrown on the ground, in a corner of the room, the bed was overturned and broken, all the straw had been torn from the mattress, and the wife and sons of the dead man, armed with pickaxes and spades, were wildly overturning the beaten soil that formed the floor of the hovel. They were seeking the hidden treasures.

"What do you want?" demanded the widow, rudely.

"Father Chupin."

"You can see very plainly that he has been murdered," replied one of the sons.

And brandishing his pick a few inches from Jean's head, he exclaimed:

"And you, perhaps, are the assassin. But that is for justice to determine. Now, decamp; if you do not——"

Had he listened to the promptings of anger, Jean Lacheneur would certainly have attempted to make the Chupins repent their menaces.

But a conflict was scarcely permissible under the circumstances.

He departed without a word, and hastened back to the *Borderie*.

The death of Chupin overturned all his plans, and greatly irritated him.

"I had sworn that the vile wretch who betrayed my father should perish by my hand," he murmured; "and now my vengeance has escaped me. Someone has robbed me of it."

Then he asked himself who the murderer could be.

"Is it possible that Martial assassinated Chupin after he murdered Marie-Anne? To kill an accomplice is an effectual way of assuring one's self of his silence."

He had reached the *Borderie*, and was about going upstairs, when he thought he heard the sound of voices in the back room.

"That is strange," he said to himself. "Who can it be?"

And impelled by curiosity, he went and tapped upon the communicating door.

The *abbé* instantly made his appearance, hurriedly closing the door behind him. He was very pale, and visibly agitated.

"Who is it?" inquired Jean, eagerly.

"It is—it is—Guess who it is."

"How can I guess?"

"Maurice d'Escorval and Corporal Ba-vois."

"My God!"

"And it is a miracle that he has not been upstairs."

"But whence does he come? Why have we received no news of him?"

"I do not know. He has been here only five minutes. Poor boy! after I told him that his father was safe, his first words were: 'And Marie-Anne?' He loves her more devotedly than ever. He comes with his heart full of her, confident and hopeful; and I tremble—I fear to tell him the truth."

"Oh, terrible! terrible!"

"I have warned you; be prudent—and now, come in."

They entered the room together; and Maurice and the old soldier greeted Jean with the most ardent expressions of friendship.

They had not seen each other since the duel on the Reche, which had been interrupted by the arrival of the soldiers; and when they parted that day they scarcely expected to meet again.

"And now we are together once more," said Maurice, gayly, "and we have nothing to fear."

Never had the unfortunate man seemed so cheerful; and it was with the most jubilant air that he explained the reason of his long silence.

"Three days after we crossed the frontier," said he, "Corporal Bavois and I reached Turin. It was time, for we were tired out. We went to a small inn, and they gave us a room with two beds.

"That evening, while we were undressing, the corporal said to me: 'I am capable of sleeping two whole days without waking.' I, too, promised myself a rest of at least twelve hours. We reckoned without our host, as you will see.

"It was scarcely daybreak when we were awakened by a great tumult. A dozen rough-looking men entered our room, and ordered us, in Italian, to dress ourselves. They were too strong for us, so we obeyed; and an hour later we were in prison, confined in the same cell. Our reflections, I confess, were not *couleur de rose*.

"I well remember how the corporal said again and again, in that cool way of his: 'It will require four days to obtain our extradition, three days to take us back to Montagnac—that is seven days; it will take one day more to try me; so I have in all eight days to live.'"

"Upon my word! that was exactly what I thought," said the old soldier, approvingly.

"For five months," continued Maurice, "instead of saying 'good-night' to each other, we said: 'To-morrow they will come for us.' But they did not come.

"We were kindly treated. They did not take away my money; and they willingly sold us little luxuries; they also granted us two hours of exercise each day in the court-yard, and even loaned us books to read. In short, I should not have had any particular cause to complain, if I had been allowed to receive or to forward letters, or if I had been able to communicate with my father or with Marie-Anne. But we

were in the secret cells, and were not allowed to have any intercourse with the other prisoners.

"At length our detention seemed so strange and became so insupportable to us, that we resolved to obtain some explanation of it, cost what it might.

"We changed our tactics. Up to that time we had been quite submissive; we suddenly became violent and intractable. We made the prison resound with our cries and protestations; we were continually sending for the superintendent; we claimed the intervention of the French ambassador. We were not obliged to wait long for the result.

"One fine afternoon, the superintendent released us, not without expressing much regret at being deprived of the society of such amiable and charming guests.

"Our first act, as you may suppose, was to run to the ambassador. We did not see that dignitary, but his secretary received us. He knit his brows when I told my story, and became excessively grave. I remember each word of his reply.

"'Monsieur,' said he, 'I can swear that the persecution of which you have been the object in France had nothing whatever to do with your detention here.'

"And as I expressed my astonishment:

"'One moment,' he added. 'I shall express my opinion very frankly. One of your enemies—I leave you to discover which one—must exert a very powerful influence in Turin. You were in his way, perhaps; he had you imprisoned by the Piedmontese police.'"

With a heavy blow of his clinched fist, Jean Lacheneur made the table beside him reel.

"Ah! the secretary was right!" he exclaimed. "Maurice, it was Martial de Sairmeuse who caused your arrest—"

"Or the Marquis de Courtoirieu," interrupted the *abbé*, with a warning glance at Jean.

A wrathful light gleamed for an instant in the eyes of Maurice; but it vanished almost immediately, and he shrugged his shoulders carelessly.

"Nonsense," said he, "I do not wish to trouble myself any more about the past. My father is well again, that is the main thing. We can easily find some way of getting him safely across the frontier. Marie-Anne and I, by our devotion, will strive to make him forget that my rashness almost cost him his life. He is so good, so indulgent to the faults of others. We will

take up our residence in Italy or in Switzerland. You will accompany us, Monsieur l'Abbé, and you also, Jean. As for you, corporal, it is decided that you belong to our family."

Nothing could be more heart-breaking than to see this man, upon whose life such a devastating blight was about to fall, so bright and full of hope and confidence.

The impression produced upon Jean and the *abbé* was so profound that, in spite of their efforts, it showed itself in their faces; and Maurice remarked their agitation.

"What is the matter?" he inquired, in evident surprise.

They trembled, hung their heads, but did not say a word.

The unfortunate man's astonishment changed to a vague, inexpressible fear.

He enumerated all the misfortunes which could possibly have befallen him.

"What has happened?" he asked, in a stifled voice. "My father is safe, is he not? You said that my mother would desire nothing, if I were with her again. Is it Marie-Anne——"

He hesitated.

"Courage, Maurice," murmured the *abbé*. "Courage!"

The stricken man tottered as if about to fall; his face grew whiter than the plastered wall against which he leaned for support.

"Marie-Anne is dead!" he exclaimed.

Jean and the *abbé* were silent.

"Dead!" Maurice repeated—"and no secret voice warned me. Dead! when?"

"She died only last night," replied Jean.

Maurice rose.

"Last night?" said he. "In that case, then, she is still here. Where? upstairs?"

And without waiting for any response, he darted toward the staircase so quickly that neither Jean nor the *abbé* had time to intercept him.

With three bounds he reached the chamber; he walked straight to the bed, and with a firm hand turned back the sheet that hid the face of the dead.

He recoiled with a heart-broken cry.

Was this indeed the beautiful, the radiant Marie-Anne, whom he had loved to his own undoing! He did not recognize her.

He could not recognize these distorted features, this face swollen and discoloured by poison, these eyes which were almost concealed by the purple swelling around them.

When Jean and the priest entered the room they found him standing with head thrown back, eyes dilated with terror, and rigid arm extended toward the corpse.

"Maurice," said the priest, gently, "be calm. Courage!"

He turned with an expression of complete bewilderment upon his features.

"Yes," he faltered, "that is what I need—courage!"

He staggered; they were obliged to support him to an arm-chair.

"Be a man," continued the priest; "where is your energy? To live, is to suffer."

He listened, but did not seem to comprehend.

"Live!" he murmured, "why should I desire to live since she is dead?"

The dread light of insanity glittered in his dry eyes. The *abbé* was alarmed.

"If he does not weep, he will lose his reason!" he thought.

And in an imperious voice, he said:

"You have no right to despair thus; you owe a sacred duty to your child."

The recollection which had given Marie-Anne strength to hold death at bay for a moment, saved Maurice from the dangerous torpor into which he was sinking. He trembled as if he had received an electric shock, and springing from his chair:

"That is true," he cried. "Take me to my child."

"Not just now, Maurice; wait a little."

"Where is it? Tell me where it is."

"I cannot; I do not know."

An expression of unspeakable anguish stole over the face of Maurice, and in a husky voice he said:

"What! you do not know! Did she not confide in you?"

"No. I suspected her secret. I alone——"

"You, alone! Then the child is dead, perhaps. Even if it is living, who can tell me where it is?"

"We shall undoubtedly find something that will give us a clue."

"You are right," faltered the wretched man. "When Marie-Anne knew that her life was in danger, she would not have forgotten her child. Those who cared for her in her last moments must have received some message for me. I wish to see those who watched over her. Who were they?"

The priest averted his face.

"I asked you who was with her when she died," repeated Maurice, in a sort of frenzy.

And, as the *abbé* remained silent, a terrible light dawned on the mind of the stricken man. He understood the cause of Marie-Anne's distorted features now.

"She perished the victim of a crime!" he exclaimed. "Some monster has killed her. If she died such a death, our child is lost forever! And it was I who recommended, who commanded the greatest precautions! Ah! it is a curse upon me!"

He sank back in his chair, overwhelmed with sorrow and remorse, and silent tears rolled slowly down his cheeks.

"He is saved!" thought the *abbé*, whose heart bled at the sight of such despair. Suddenly someone plucked him by the sleeve.

It was Jean Lacheneur, and he drew the priest into the embrasure of a window.

"What is this about a child?" he asked, harshly.

A flood of crimson suffused the brow of the priest.

"You have heard," he responded, laconically.

"Am I to understand that Marie-Anne was the mistress of Maurice, and that she had a child by him? Is this true? I will not—I cannot believe it! She, whom I revered as a saint! Did her pure forehead and her chaste looks lie? And he—Maurice—he whom I loved as a brother! So, his friendship was only a mask assumed to enable him to steal our honour!"

He hissed these words through his set teeth in such low tones that Maurice, absorbed in his agony of grief, did not overhear him.

"But how did she conceal her shame?" he continued. "No one suspected it—absolutely no one. And what has she done with her child? Appalled by a dread of disgrace, did she commit the crime committed by so many other ruined and forsaken women? Did she murder her own child?"

A hideous smile curved his thin lips.

"If the child is alive," he added, "I will find it, and Maurice shall be punished for his perfidy as he deserves."

He paused; the sound of horses' hoofs upon the road attracted his attention, and that of *Abbé Midon*.

They glanced out of the window and saw a horseman stop before the little footpath, alight from his horse, throw the reins to his groom, and advance toward the *Borderie*.

At the sight of the visitor, Jean Lacheneur uttered the menacing snarl of an infuriated wild beast.

"The Marquis de Sairmeuse here!" he exclaimed.

He sprang to Maurice, and shaking him violently he cried:

"Up! here is Martial, Marie-Anne's murderer! Up! he is coming! he is at our mercy!"

Maurice sprang up in a fury of passion, but the *abbé* darted to the door and intercepted the infuriated men as they were about to leave the room.

"Not a word, young men, not a threat!" he said, imperiously. "I forbid it. At least respect the dead who is lying here!"

There was such an irresistible authority in his words and glance, that Jean and Maurice stood as if turned to stone.

Before the priest had time to say more, Martial was there.

He did not cross the threshold. With a glance he took in the whole scene; he turned very pale, but not a gesture, not a word escaped his lips.

Wonderful as was his accustomed control over himself, he could not articulate a syllable; and it was only by pointing to the bed upon which Marie-Anne's lifeless form was reposing, that he asked an explanation.

"She was infamously poisoned last evening," replied the *abbé*, sadly.

Maurice, forgetting the priest's commands, stepped forward.

"She was alone and defenceless. I have been at liberty only two days. But I know the name of the man who had me arrested at Turin, and thrown into prison. They told me the coward's name!"

Instinctively Martial recoiled.

"It was you, infamous wretch!" exclaimed Maurice. "You confess your guilt, scoundrel?"

Once again the *abbé* interposed; he threw himself between the rivals, persuaded that Martial was about to attack Maurice.

But no; the Marquis de Sairmeuse had resumed the haughty and indifferent manner which was habitual to him. He took from his pocket a bulky envelope, and throwing it upon the table:

"Here," he said coldly, "is what I was bringing to Mademoiselle Lacheneur. It contains first a safe-conduct from His Majesty for Monsieur d'Escorval. From this moment, he is at liberty to leave Poignot's farmhouse and return to Escorval. He is free, he is saved, he is granted a new trial, and there can be no doubt of his acquittal. Here is also a decree of his non-complicity rendered in favour of *Abbé Midon*, and an order from the bishop which reinstates him as *Curé* of Sairmeuse; and lastly, a discharge, drawn up in due form, and an acknowledged right to a pension in the name of *Corporal Bavois*."

He paused, and as his astonished hearers stood rooted to their places with wonder, he turned and approached Marie-Anne's bedside.

With hand uplifted to heaven over the lifeless form of her whom he had loved, and in a voice that would have made the murderess tremble in her innermost soul, he said, solemnly:

"To you, Marie-Anne, I swear that I will avenge you!"

For a few seconds he stood motionless, then suddenly he stopped, pressed a kiss upon the dead girl's brow, and left the room.

"And you think that man can be guilty!" exclaimed the *abbé*. "You see, Jean, that you are mad!"

"And this last insult to my dead sister is an honour, I suppose," said Jean, with a furious gesture.

"And the wretch binds my hands by saving my father!" exclaimed Maurice.

From his place by the window, the *abbé* saw Martial remount his horse.

But the marquis did not take the road to Montaignac. It was toward the Château de Courtornieu that he hastened.

CHAPTER XLVIII

THE reason of Mme. Blanche had sustained a blasting shock, when Chupin was obliged to lift her and carry her from Marie-Anne's chamber.

But she lost consciousness entirely when she saw the old poacher stricken down by her side.

On and after that night Aunt Medea took her revenge for all the slights she had received.

Scarcely tolerated until then, at Courtornieu, she henceforth made herself respected, and even feared.

She, who usually swooned if a kitten hurt itself, did not utter a cry. Her extreme fear gave her the courage that not unfrequently animates cowards when they are in some dire extremity.

She seized the arm of her bewildered niece, and, by dint of dragging and pushing, had her back at the château in much less time than it had taken them to go to the Borderie.

It was half-past one o'clock when they reached the little garden-gate, by which they had left the grounds.

No one in the château was aware of their long absence.

This was due to several different circumstances. First, to the precautions taken by

Blanche, who had given orders, before going out, that no one should come to her room, on any pretext whatever, unless she rang.

It also chanced to be the birthday of the marquis's *valet de chambre*. The servants had dined more sumptuously than usual. They had toasts and songs over their dessert; and at the conclusion of the repast, they amused themselves by an extempore ball.

They were still dancing at half-past one; all the doors were open, and the two ladies succeeded in gaining the chamber of Blanche without being observed.

When the doors of the apartment had been securely closed, and when there was no longer any fear of listeners, Aunt Medea attacked her niece.

"Now will you explain what happened at the Borderie; and what you were doing there?" she inquired.

Blanche shuddered.

"Why do you wish to know?" she asked.

"Because I suffered agony during the three hours that I spent in waiting for you. What was the meaning of those despairing cries that I heard? Why did you call for aid? I heard a death-rattle that made my hair stand on end with terror. Why was it necessary for Chupin to bring you out in his arms?"

Aunt Medea would have packed her trunks, perhaps, that very evening, had she seen the glance which her niece bestowed upon her.

Blanche longed for power to annihilate this relative—this witness who might ruin her by a word, but whom she would ever have beside her, a living reproach for her crime.

"You do not answer me," insisted Aunt Medea.

Blanche was trying to decide whether it would be better for her to reveal the truth, horrible as it was, or to invent some plausible explanation.

To confess all! It would be intolerable. She would place herself, body and soul, in Aunt Medea's power.

But, on the other hand, if she deceived her, was it not more than probable that her aunt would betray her by some involuntary exclamation when she heard of the crime which had been committed at the Borderie?

"For she is so stupid!" thought Blanche.

She felt that it would be the wisest plan, under such circumstances, to be perfectly frank, to teach her relative her lesson, and to imbue her with some of her own firmness.

Having come to this conclusion, she disdained all concealment.

"Ah, well!" she said, "I was jealous of Marie-Anne. I thought she was Martial's mistress. I was half-crazed, and I killed her."

She expected despairing cries, or a fainting fit; nothing of the kind. Stupid though Aunt Medea was, she had divined the truth before she interrogated her niece. Besides, the insults she had received for years had extinguished every generous sentiment, dried up the springs of emotion, and destroyed every particle of moral sensibility she had ever possessed.

"Ah!" she exclaimed, "it is terrible! What if it should be discovered!"

Then she shed a few tears, but not more than she had often wept for some trifle.

Blanche breathed more freely. Surely she could count upon the silence and absolute submission of her dependent relative. Convinced of this, she began to recount all the details of the frightful drama which had been enacted at the *Borderie*.

She yielded to a desire which was stronger than her own will; to the wild longing that sometimes unbinds the tongue of the worst criminals, and forces them—irresistibly impels them—to talk of their crimes, even when they distrust their confidant.

But when she came to the proofs which had convinced her of her lamentable mistake, she suddenly paused in dismay.

That certificate of marriage signed by the *Curé* of Vigano: what had she done with it? where was it? She remembered holding it in her hands.

She sprang up, examined the pocket of her dress and uttered a cry of joy. She had it safe. She threw it into a drawer, and turned the key.

Aunt Medea wished to retire to her own room, but Blanche entreated her to remain. She was unwilling to be left alone—she dared not—she was afraid.

And as if she desired to silence the inward voice that tormented her, she talked with extreme volubility, repeating again and again that she was ready to do anything in expiation of her crime, and that she would brave impossibilities to recover Marie-Anne's child.

And certainly, the task was both difficult and dangerous.

If she sought the child openly, it would be equivalent to a confession of guilt. She would be compelled to act secretly, and with great caution.

"But I shall succeed," she said. "I will spare no expense."

And remembering her vow, and the threats of her dying victim, she added:

"I must succeed. I have sworn—and I was forgiven under those conditions."

Astonishment dried the ever-ready tears of Aunt Medea.

That her niece, with her dreadful crime still fresh in her mind, could coolly reason, deliberate, and make plans for the future, seemed to her incomprehensible.

"What an iron will!" she thought.

But in her bewilderment she quite overlooked something that would have enlightened any ordinary observer.

Blanche was seated upon her bed, her hair was unbound, her eyes were glittering with delirium, and her incoherent words and her excited gestures betrayed the intense anxiety that was torturing her.

And she talked and talked, exclaiming, questioning Aunt Medea, and forcing her to reply, only that she might escape from her own thoughts.

Morning had dawned some time before, and the servants were heard bustling about the château, and Blanche, oblivious to all around her, was still explaining how she could, in less than a year, restore Marie-Anne's child to Maurice d'Escorval.

She paused abruptly in the middle of a sentence.

Instinct had suddenly warned her of the danger she incurred in making the slightest change in her habits.

She sent Aunt Medea away, then, at the usual hour, rang for her maid.

It was nearly eleven o'clock, and she just completing her toilet, when the ringing of the bell announced a visitor.

Almost immediately a maid appeared, evidently in a state of great excitement.

"What is it?" inquired Blanche, eagerly.

"Who has come?"

"Ah, Madame—that is, Mademoiselle, if you only knew——"

"Will you speak?"

"The Marquis de Sairmeuse is below, in the blue drawing-room; and he begs Mademoiselle to grant him a few moments' conversation."

Had a thunder-bolt riven the earth at the feet of the murderer, she could not have been more terrified.

"All must have been discovered!" this was her first thought. That alone would have brought Martial there.

She almost decided to reply that she was not at home, or that she was extremely ill; but reason told her that she was alarming herself needlessly, perhaps, and

that, in any case, the worst was preferable to suspense.

"Tell the marquis that I will be there in a moment," she replied.

She desired a few minutes of solitude to compose her features, to regain her self-possession, if possible, and to conquer the nervous trembling that made her shake like a leaf.

But just as she was most disquieted by the thought of her peril, a sudden inspiration brought a malicious smile to her lip.

"Ah!" she thought, "my agitation will seem perfectly natural. It may even be made of service."

As she descended the grand staircase, she could not help saying to herself:

"Martial's presence here is incompressible."

It was certainly very extraordinary; and it had not been without much hesitation that he resolved upon this painful step.

But it was the only means of procuring several important documents which were indispensable in the revision of M. d'Es-corval's case.

These documents, after the baron's condemnation, had been left in the hands of the Marquis de Courtornieu. Now that he had lost his reason, it was impossible to ask him for them; and Martial was obliged to apply to the daughter for permission to search for them among her father's papers.

This was why Martial said to himself that morning:

"I will carry the baron's safe-conduct to Marie-Anne, and then I will push on to Courtornieu."

He arrived at the Borderie gay and confident, his heart full of hope. Alas! Marie-Anne was dead.

No one would ever know what a severe blow it had been to Martial; and his conscience told him that he was not free from blame; that he had, at least, rendered the execution of the crime an easy matter.

For it was indeed he who, by abusing his influence, had caused the arrest of Maurice at Turin.

But though he was capable of the basest perfidy when his love was at stake, he was incapable of virulent animosity.

Marie-Anne was dead; he had it in his power to revoke the benefits he had conferred, but the thought of doing so never once occurred to him. And when Jean and Maurice insulted him, he revenged himself only by overwhelming them by his magnanimity. When he left the Borderie, pale as a ghost, his lips still cold from the

kiss pressed on the brow of the dead, he said to himself:

"For her sake, I will go to Courtornieu. In memory of her, the baron must be saved."

By the expression on the faces of the valets when he dismounted in the courtyard of the château and asked to see Mme. Blanche, the marquis was again reminded of the profound sensation which this unexpected visit would produce. But, what did it matter to him? He was passing through one of those crises in which the mind can conceive of no further misfortune, and is therefore indifferent to everything.

Still he trembled when they ushered him into the blue drawing-room. He remembered the room well. It was here that Blanche had been wont to receive him in days gone by, when his fancy was vacillating between her and Marie-Anne.

How many pleasant hours they had passed together here! He seemed to see Blanche again, as she was then, radiant with youth, gay and laughing. Her *naïveté* was affected, perhaps, but was it any the less charming on that account?

At this very moment Blanche entered the room. She looked so careworn and sad that he scarcely knew her. His heart was touched by the look of patient sorrow imprinted upon her features.

"How much you must have suffered, Blanche," he murmured, scarcely knowing what he said.

It cost her an effort to repress her secret joy. She saw that he knew nothing of her crime. She noticed his emotion, and saw the profit she could derive from it.

"I can never cease to regret having displeased you," she replied, humbly and sadly. "I shall never be consoled."

She had touched the vulnerable spot in every man's heart.

For there is no man so sceptical, so cold, or so *blasé* that his vanity is not pleased with the thought that a woman is dying for his sake.

There is no man who is not moved by this most delicious flattery, and who is not ready and willing to give, at least, a tender pity in exchange for such devotion.

"Is it possible that you could forgive me?" stammered Martial.

The wily enchantress averted her face as if to prevent him from reading in her eyes a weakness of which she was ashamed. It was the most eloquent of replies.

But Martial said no more on this subject.

He made known his petition, which was granted, then fearing, perhaps, to promise too much, he said:

"Since you do not forbid it, Blanche, I will return—to-morrow—another day."

As he rode back to Montaignac, Martial's thoughts were busy.

"She really loves me," he thought; "that pallor, that weakness could not be feigned. Poor girl! she is my wife, after all. The reasons that influenced me in my rupture with her father exist no longer, and the Marquis de Courtornieu may be regarded as dead."

All the inhabitants of Sairmeuse were congregated on the public square when Martial passed through the village. They had just heard of the murder at the Borderie, and the *abbé* was now closeted with the justice of the peace, relating the circumstances of the poisoning.

After a prolonged inquest the following verdict was rendered: "That a man known as Chupin, a notoriously bad character, had entered the house of Marie-Anne Lacheneur, and taken advantage of her absence to mingle poison with her food."

The report added that: "Said Chupin had been himself assassinated, soon after his crime, by a certain Balstain, whose whereabouts were unknown."

But this affair interested the community much less than the visits which Martial was paying to Mme. Blanche.

It was soon rumoured that the Marquis and the Marquise de Sairmeuse were reconciled, and in a few weeks they left for Paris with the intention of residing there permanently. A few days after their departure, the eldest of the Chupins announced his determination of taking up his abode in the same great city.

Some of his friends endeavoured to dissuade him, assuring him that he would certainly die of starvation.

"Nonsense!" he replied, with singular assurance; "I, on the contrary, have an idea that I shall not want for anything there."

CHAPTER XLIX

Time gradually heals all wounds, and in less than a year it was difficult to discern any trace of the fierce whirlwind of passion which had devastated the peaceful valley of the Oiselle.

What reminded to attest the reality of all these events, which, though they were so recent, had already been relegated to the domain of the legendary?

A charred ruin on the Reche.

A grave in the cemetery, upon which was inscribed:

"MARIE-ANNE LACHENEUR, DIED AT THE AGE OF TWENTY. PRAY FOR HER!"

Only a few, the oldest men and the politicians of the village, forgot their solicitude in regard to the crops to remember this episode.

Sometimes, during the long winter evenings, when they had gathered at the Bœuf Couronne, they laid down their greasy cards and gravely discussed the events of the past years.

They never failed to remark that almost all the actors in that bloody drama at Montaignac had, in common parlance, "come to a bad end."

Victors and vanquished seemed to be pursued by the same inexorable fatality.

Look at the names already upon the fatal list!

Lacheneur, beheaded.

Chanlouineau, shot.

Marie-Anne, poisoned.

Chupin, the traitor, assassinated.

The Marquis de Courtornieu lived, or rather survived, but death would have seemed a mercy in comparison with such total annihilation of intelligence. He had fallen below the level of the brute, which is, at least, endowed with instinct. Since the departure of his daughter he had been cared for by two servants, who did not allow him to give them much trouble; and when they desired to go out they shut him up, not in his chamber, but in the cellar, to prevent his ravings and shrieks from being heard from without.

If people supposed for awhile that the Sairmeuse would escape the fate of the others, they were mistaken. It was not long before the curse fell upon them.

One fine morning in the month of December, the duke left the château to take part in a wolf-hunt in the neighbourhood.

At nightfall, his horse returned, panting, covered with foam, and riderless.

What had become of its master?

A search was instituted at once, and all night long twenty men, bearing torches, wandered through the woods, shouting and calling at the top of their voices.

Five days went by, and the search for the missing man was almost abandoned, when a shepherd lad, pale with fear, came to the château one morning to tell them that he had discovered, at the base of a precipice, the bloody and mangled body of the Duc de Sairmeuse.

It seemed strange that such an excellent rider should have met with such a fate. There might have been some doubt as to its being an accident, had it not been for the explanation given by the grooms.

"The duke was riding an exceedingly vicious beast," said these men. "She was always taking fright and shying at everything."

The following week Jean Lacheneur left the neighbourhood.

The conduct of this singular man had caused much comment. When Marie-Anne died, he at first refused his inheritance.

"I wish nothing that came to her through Chanlouineau," he said everywhere, thus calumniating the memory of his sister as he had calumniated her when alive.

Then, after a short absence, and without any apparent reason, he suddenly changed his mind.

He not only accepted the property, but made all possible haste to obtain possession of it. He made many excuses; and, if one might believe him, he was not acting in his own interest, but merely conforming to the wishes of his deceased sister; and he declared that not a penny would go into his pockets.

This much is certain: as soon as he obtained legal possession of the estate, he sold all the property, troubling himself but little in regard to the price he received, provided the purchasers paid cash.

He reserved only the furniture of the sumptuously adorned chamber at the Borderie. These articles he burned.

This strange act was the talk of the neighbourhood.

"The poor young man has lost his reason!" was the almost universal opinion.

And those who doubted it, doubted it no longer when it became known that Jean Lacheneur had formed an engagement with a company of strolling players who stopped at Montaignac for a few days.

But the young man had not wanted for good advice and kind friends. M. d'Escorval and the *abbé* had exerted all their eloquence to induce him to return to Paris, and complete his studies; but in vain.

The necessity for concealment no longer existed, either in the case of the baron or the priest.

Thanks to Martial de Sairmeuse they were now installed, the one in the presbytery, the other at Escorval, as in days gone by.

Acquitted at his new trial, restored to the possession of his property, reminded of his frightful fall only by a very slight lameness,

the baron would have deemed himself a fortunate man, had it not been for his great anxiety on his son's account.

Poor Maurice! his heart was broken by the sound of the clods of earth falling upon Marie-Anne's coffin; and his very life now seemed dependent upon the hope of finding his child.

Assured of the powerful assistance of Abbé Midon, he had confessed all to his father, and confided his secret to Corporal Bavois, who was an honoured guest at Escorval; and these devoted friends had promised him all possible aid.

The task was very difficult, however, and certain resolutions on the part of Maurice greatly diminished the chance of success.

Unlike Jean, he was determined to guard religiously the honour of the dead; and he had made his friends promise that Marie-Anne's name should not be mentioned in prosecuting the search.

"We shall succeed all the same," said the *abbé*, kindly; "with time and patience any mystery can be solved."

He divided the department into a certain number of districts; then one of the little band went each day from house to house questioning the inmates, but not without extreme caution, for fear of arousing suspicion, for a peasant becomes intractable at once if his suspicions are aroused.

But the weeks went by, and the quest was fruitless. Maurice was deeply discouraged.

"My child died on coming into the world," he said, again and again.

But the *abbé* reassured him.

"I am morally certain that such was not the case," he replied. "I know, by Marie-Anne's absence, the date of her child's birth. I saw her after her recovery; she was comparatively gay and smiling. Draw your own conclusions."

"And yet there is not a nook or corner for miles around which we have not explored."

"True; but we must extend the circle of our investigations."

The priest, now, was only striving to gain time, knowing full well that it is the sovereign balm for all sorrows.

His confidence, which had been very great at first, had been sensibly diminished by the responses of an old woman, who passed for one of the greatest gossips in the community.

Adroitly interrogated, the worthy dame replied that she knew nothing of such a child, but that there must be one in the neighbourhood, since it was the third time she had been questioned on the subject.

Intense as was his surprise, the *abbé* succeeded in hiding it.

He set the old gossip to talking, and after a two hours' conversation, he arrived at the conclusion that two persons besides Maurice were searching for Marie-Anne's child.

Why, with what aim, and who these persons could be the *abbé* was unable to ascertain.

"Ah! rascals have their uses after all," he thought. "If we only had a man like Cupin to set upon the track!"

But the old poacher was dead, and his eldest son—the one who knew Blanche de Courtornieu's secret—was in Paris.

Only the widow and the second son remained in Sairmeuse.

They had not, as yet, succeeded in discovering the twenty thousand francs, but the fever for gold was burning in their veins, and they persisted in their search. From morning until night the mother and son toiled on, until the earth around their hut had been explored to the depth of six feet.

A word dropped by a peasant one day put an end to these researches.

"Really, my boy," he said, addressing young Cupin, "I did not suppose you were such a fool as to persist in hunting birds' nests after the birds have flown. Your brother, who is in Paris, can undoubtedly tell you where the treasure was concealed."

The younger Cupin uttered the fierce roar of a wild beast.

"Holy Virgin! you are right!" he exclaimed. "Wait until I get money enough to take me to Paris, and we will see."

CHAPTER L

MARTIAL DE SAIRMEUSE's unexpected visit to the Château de Courtornieu had alarmed Aunt Medea even more than Blanche.

In ten seconds, more ideas passed through her brain than had visited it for ten years.

She saw the *gendarmes* at the château; she saw her niece arrested, incarcerated in the Montagnac prison, and brought before the Court of Assizes.

If this were all she had to fear! But suppose she, too, were compromised, suspected of complicity, dragged before the judge, and even accused of being the sole culprit!

Finding the suspense intolerable, she left her room; and, stealing on tiptoe to the great drawing-room, she applied her ear to the door of the little blue *salon*, in which Blanche and Martial were seated.

The conversation which she heard convinced her that her fears were groundless.

She drew a long breath, as if a mighty burden had been lifted from her breast. But a new idea, which was to grow, flourish, and bear fruit, had just taken root in her brain.

When Martial left the room, Aunt Medea at once opened the communicating door and entered the blue *salon*, thus avowing that she had been a listener.

Twenty-four hours earlier she would not have dreamed of committing such an enormity.

"Well, Blanche, we were frightened at nothing," she exclaimed.

Blanche did not reply.

She was deliberating, forcing herself to weigh the probable consequences of all these events which had succeeded each other with such marvelous rapidity.

"Perhaps the hour of my revenge is almost here," murmured Blanche, as if communing with herself.

"What do you say?" inquired Aunt Medea, with evident curiosity.

"I say, aunt, that in less than a month I shall be Marquise de Sairmeuse in reality as well as in name. My husband will return to me, and then—oh, then!"

"God grant it!" said Aunt Medea, hypocritically.

In her secret heart she had but little faith in this prediction, and whether it was realized or not mattered little to her.

"Still another proof that your jealousy led you astray; and that—that what you did at the *Borderie* was unnecessary," she said, in that low tone that accomplices always use in speaking of their crime.

Such had been the opinion of Blanche; but she now shook her head, and gloomily replied:

"You are wrong; that which took place at the *Borderie* has restored my husband to me. I understand it all, now. It is true that Marie-Anne was not Martial's mistress, but Martial loved her. He loved her, and the rebuffs which he received only increased his passion. It was for her sake that he abandoned me; and never, while she lived, would he have thought of me. His emotion on seeing me was the remnant of the emotion which had been awakened by another. His tenderness was only the expression of his sorrow. Whatever happens I shall have only heravings—what she has disdained!" the young marquise added, bitterly; and her eyes flashed, and she stamped her foot in ungovernable anger.

"And shall I regret what I have done?" she exclaimed; "never! no, never!"

From that moment, she was herself again, brave and determined.

But horrible fears assailed her when the inquest began.

Officials came from Montaignac charged with investigating the affair. They examined a host of witnesses, and there was even talk of sending to Paris for one of those detectives skilled in unravelling all the mysteries of crime.

Aunt Medea was half crazed with terror; and her fear was so apparent that it caused Blanche great anxiety.

"You will end by betraying us," she remarked, one evening.

"Ah! my terror is beyond my control."

"If that is the case, do not leave your room."

"It would be more prudent, certainly."

"You can say that you are not well; your meals shall be served in your own apartment."

Aunt Medea's face brightened. In her inmost heart she was enraptured. To have her meals served in her own room, in her bed in the morning, and on a little table by the fire in the evening, had long been the ambition and the dream of the poor dependent. But how to accomplish it! Two or three times, being a trifle indisposed, she had ventured to ask if her breakfast might be brought to her room, but her request had been harshly refused.

"If Aunt Medea is hungry, she will come down and take her place at the table as usual," had been the response of Mme. Blanche.

To be treated in this way in a *château* where there were a dozen servants standing about idle was hard indeed.

But now—

Every morning, in obedience to a formal order from Blanche, the cook came up to receive Aunt Medea's commands; she was permitted to dictate the bill-of-fare each day, and to order the dishes that she preferred.

These new joys awakened many strange thoughts in her mind, and dissipated much of the regret which she had felt for the crime at the *Borderie*.

The inquest was the subject of all her conversation with her niece. They had all the latest information in regard to the facts developed by the investigation through the butler, who took a great interest in such matters, and who had won the good-will of the agents from Montaignac, by making them familiar with the contents of his wine-cellar.

Through him, Blanche and her aunt learned that suspicion pointed to the deceased Chupin. Had he not been seen prowling around the *Borderie* on the very evening that the crime was committed? The testimony of the young peasant who had warned Jean Lacheneur seemed decisive.

The motive was evident; at least, everyone thought so. Twenty persons had heard Chupin declare, with frightful oaths, that he should never be tranquil in mind while a Lacheneur was left upon earth.

So that which might have ruined Blanche, saved her; and the death of the old poacher seemed really providential.

Why should she suspect that Chupin had revealed her secret before his death?

When the butler told her that the judges and the police agents had returned to Montaignac, she had great difficulty in concealing her joy.

"There is no longer anything to fear," she said to Aunt Medea.

She had, indeed, escaped the justice of man. There remained the justice of God.

A few weeks before, this thought of "the justice of God" might, perhaps, have brought a smile to the lips of Mme. Blanche.

She then regarded it as an imaginary evil, designed to hold timorous spirits in check.

On the morning that followed her crime, she almost shrugged her shoulders at the thought of Marie-Anne's dying threats.

She remembered her promise, but she did not intend to fulfil it.

She had considered the matter, and she saw the palpable risk to which she exposed herself if she endeavoured to find the missing child.

"The father will be sure to discover it," she thought.

But she was to realize the power of her victim's threats that same evening.

Overcome with fatigue, she retired to her room at an early hour, and instead of reading, as she was accustomed to do before retiring, she extinguished her candle as soon as she had undressed, saying:

"I must sleep."

But sleep had fled. Her crime was ever in her thoughts; it rose before her in all its horror and atrocity. She knew that she was lying upon her bed, at Courtornieu; and yet it seemed as if she was there in Chaulouineau's house, pouring out poison, then watching its effects, concealed in the dressing-room.

She was struggling against these thoughts; she was exerting all her strength of will to

drive away these terrible memories, when she thought she heard the key turn in the lock. She lifted her head from the pillow with a start.

Then, by the uncertain light of her night-lamp, she thought she saw the door open slowly and noiselessly. Marie-Anne entered—gliding in like a phantom. She seated herself in an arm-chair near the bed. Great tears were rolling down her cheeks, and she looked sadly, yet threateningly, around her.

The murderess hid her face under the bed-covers; and her whole body was bathed in an icy perspiration. For her, this was not a mere apparition—it was a frightful reality.

But hers was not a nature to submit unresistingly to such an impression. She shook off the stupor that was creeping over her, and tried to reason with herself aloud, as if the sound of her voice would reassure her.

"I am dreaming!" she said. "Do the dead return to life? Am I childish enough to be frightened by phantoms born of my own imaginations?"

She said this, but the phantom did not disappear.

She shut her eyes, but still she saw it through her closed eyelids—through the coverings which she had drawn up over her head she saw it still.

Not until daybreak did Mme. Blanche fall asleep.

And it was the same the next night, and the night following that, and always and always; and the terrors of each night were augmented by the terrors of the nights which had preceded it.

During the day, in the bright sunshine, she regained her courage, and became sceptical again. Then she railed at herself.

"To be afraid of something that does not exist, is folly!" she said vehemently. "To-night I will conquer my absurd weakness."

But when evening came all her brave resolution vanished, and the same fear seized her when night appeared with its *cortège* of specters.

It is true that Mme. Blanche attributed her tortures at night to the disquietude she suffered during the day.

For the officials were at Sairmeuse, then, and she trembled. A mere nothing might divert suspicion from Chupin and direct it toward her. What if some peasant had seen her with Chupin? What if some trifling circumstance should furnish a clew which would lead straight to Courtornieu?

"When the investigation is over, I shall forget," she thought.

It ended, but she did not forget.

Darwin has said:

"It is when their safety is assured that great criminals really feel remorse."

Mme. Blanche might have vouched for the truth of this assertion, made by the most profound thinker and closest observer of the age.

And yet, the agony she was enduring did not make her abandon, for a single moment, the plan she had conceived on the day of Martial's visit.

She played her part so well, that, deeply moved, almost repentant, he returned five or six times, and at last, one day, he besought her to allow him to remain.

But even the joy of this triumph did not restore her peace of mind.

Between her and her husband rose that dread apparition; and Marie-Anne's distorted features were ever before her. She knew only too well that this heartbroken man had no love to give her, and that she would never have the slightest influence over him. And to crown all, to her already intolerable sufferings was added another, more poignant than all the rest.

Speaking one evening of Marie-Anne's death, Martial forgot himself, and spoke of his oath of vengeance. He deeply regretted that Chupin was dead, he remarked, for he should have experienced an intense delight in making the wretch who murdered her *die* a lingering death in the midst of the most frightful tortures.

He spoke with extreme violence and in a voice vibrant with his still powerful passion.

And Blanche, in terror, asked herself what would be her fate if her husband ever discovered that she was the culprit—and the dark fact, always in the back of her mind, was in itself a perpetual threat that he might discover it.

She now began to regret that she had not kept the promise she had made to her victim; and she resolved to commence the search for Marie-Anne's child.

To do this effectually it was necessary for her to be in a large city—Paris, for example—where she could procure discreet and skilful agents.

It was necessary to persuade Martial to remove to the capital. She did not find this a very difficult task; and one morning, Mme. Blanche, with a radiant face, announced to Aunt Medea:

"Aunt, we leave just one week from to-day."

CHAPTER LI

BESET by a thousand fears and anxieties, Blanche had failed to notice that Aunt Medea no longer the same.

The change, it is true, had been gradual; it had not struck the servants, but it was none the less positive and real, and it betrayed itself in numberless trifles.

For example, though the poor dependent still retained her humble, resigned manner; she had lost, little by little, the servile fear that had showed itself in her every movement. She no longer trembled when anyone addressed her, and there was occasionally a ring of independence in her voice.

If visitors were present, she no longer kept herself modestly in the background, but drew forward her chair and took part in the conversation. At table, she allowed her preferences and her dislikes to appear. On two or three occasions she had ventured to differ from her niece in opinion, and had even been so bold as to question the propriety of some of her orders.

Once, Mme. Blanche, on going out, asked Aunt Medea to accompany her; but the latter declared she had a cold, and remained at home.

And, on the following Sunday, although Blanche did not wish to attend vespers, Aunt Medea declared her intention of going; and as it rained, she requested the coachman to harness the horses to the carriage, which was done.

All this was nothing, in appearance; in reality, it was monstrous, amazing. It was quite plain that the humble relative was becoming bold, even audacious, in her demands.

As this departure, which her niece had just announced so gayly, had never been discussed before her, she was greatly surprised.

"What! you are going away," she repeated, "you are leaving Courtornieu?"

"And without regret."

"To go where, pray?"

"To Paris. We shall reside there; that is decided. That is the place for my husband. His name, his fortune, his talents, the favour of the King, assure him a high position there. He will repurchase the Hôtel de Sairmeuse, and furnish it magnificently. We shall have a princely establishment."

All the torments of envy were visible upon Aunt Medea's countenance.

"And what is to become of me?" she asked, in plaintive tones.

"You, aunt! You will remain here; you

will be mistress of the château. A trustworthy person must remain to watch over my poor father. You will be happy and contented here, I hope."

But no; Aunt Medea did not seem satisfied.

"I shall never have courage to stay all alone in this great château," she whined.

"You foolish woman! will you not have the servants, the gardeners, and the *concierge* to protect you?"

"That makes no difference. I am afraid of insane people. When the marquis begins to rave and howl I feel as if I should go mad myself."

Blanche shrugged her shoulders.

"What do you wish, then?" she asked, in a still more sarcastic manner.

"I thought—I wondered—if you would not take me with you."

"To Paris! You are crazy, I do believe. What would you do there?"

"Blanche, I entreat you, I beseech you, to do so!"

"Impossible, aunt; impossible!"

Aunt Medea seemed to be in despair.

"And what if I should tell you that I cannot remain here—that I dare not—that I should die!"

A flush of impatience dyed the cheek of Mme. Blanche.

"You weary me beyond endurance," she said, rudely.

And with a gesture that increased the harshness of her words, she added:

"If Courtornieu displeases you so much, there is nothing to prevent you from seeking a home more to your taste. You are free and of age."

Aunt Medea turned very pale, and she bit her lips until the blood came.

"That is to say," she said, at last, "you permit me to take my choice between dying of fear at Courtornieu and ending my days in a hospital. Thanks, my niece, thanks. That is like you. I expected nothing less of you. Thanks!"

She raised her head, and a dangerous light gleamed in her eyes. There was the hiss of a serpent in the voice in which she continued:

"Very well! this decides me. I entreated you, and you brutally refused to heed my prayer, now I command and I say: 'I will go!' Yes, I intend to go with you to Paris—and I shall go. Ah! it surprises you to hear poor, meek, much-abused Aunt Medea speak in this way. I have endured in silence for a long time, but I have rebelled at last. My life in this house has been a hell. It is true that you have given me shelter—that

you have fed and lodged me; but you have taken my entire life in exchange. What servant ever endured what I have endured? Have you ever treated one of your maids as you have treated me, your own flesh and blood? And I have had no wages; on the contrary, I was expected to be grateful since I lived by your tolerance. Ah! you have made me pay dearly for the crime of being poor. How you have insulted me—humiliated me—trampled me under foot!"

She paused.

The bitter rancor which had been accumulating for years fairly choked her; but after a moment she resumed, in a tone of intense irony:

"You ask me what I would do in Paris? I, too, would enjoy myself. What will you do, yourself? You will go to Court, to balls, and to the play, will you not? Very well, I will accompany you. I will attend these *fêtes*. I will have handsome toilets, I—poor Aunt Medea—who have never seen myself in anything but shabby black woollen dresses. Have you ever thought of giving me the pleasure of possessing a handsome dress? Yes, twice a year, perhaps, you have given me a black silk, recommending me to take good care of it. But it was not for my sake that you went to this expense. It was for your own sake; and in order that your poor relation should do honour to your generosity. You dressed me in it, as you sew gold lace upon the clothing of your lackeys, through vanity. And I endured all this; I made myself insignificant and humble; buffeted upon one cheek, I offered the other. I must live—I must have food. And you, Blanche, how often, to make me subservient to your will, have you said to me: 'You will do this—and-so, if you desire to remain at Court-tornieu?' And I obeyed—I was forced to obey, since I knew not where to go. Ah! you have abused me in every way; but now my turn has come!"

Blanche so amazed that she could not articulate a syllable. At last, in a scarcely audible voice, she faltered:

"I do not understand you, aunt; I do not understand you."

The poor dependent shrugged her shoulders, as her niece had done a few moments before.

"In that case," said she, slowly, "I may as well tell you that since you have, against my will, made me your accomplice, we must share everything in common. I share the danger; I will share the pleasure. What if all should be discovered? Do you ever

think of that? Yes; and that is why you are seeking diversion. Very well! I also desire diversion. I shall go to Paris with you."

By a supreme effort Blanche had succeeded in regaining her self-possession, in some measure at least.

"And if I should say no?" she responded, coldly.

"But you will not say no."

"And why, if you please?"

"Because——"

"Will you go to the authorities and denounce me?"

Aunt Medea shook her head.

"I am not such a fool," she retorted. "I should only compromise myself. No, I shall not do that; but I might, perhaps, tell your husband what happened at the *Bordier*."

Blanche shuddered. No threat was capable of moving her like that.

"You shall accompany us, aunt," said she; "I promise it."

Then she added, gently:

"But it is unnecessary to threaten me. You have been cruel, aunt, and at the same time, unjust. If you have been unhappy in our house, you alone are to blame. Why have you said nothing? I attributed your complaisance to your affection for me. How was I to know that a woman as quiet and modest as yourself longed for fine apparel. Confess that it was impossible. Had I known— But rest easy, aunt; I will atone for my neglect."

And as Aunt Medea, having obtained all she desired, stammered an excuse:

"Nonsense!" Blanche exclaimed; "let us forget this foolish quarrel. You forgive me, do you not?"

And the two ladies embraced each other with the greatest effusion, like two friends united after a misunderstanding. But Aunt Medea was as far from being deceived by this mock reconciliation as the clear-sighted Blanche.

"It will be best for me to keep on the *qui vive*," thought the humble relative. "God only knows with what intense joy my dear niece would send me to join Marie-Anne."

Perhaps a similar thought flitted through the mind of Mme. Blanche.

She felt as a convict might feel on seeing his most execrated enemy, perhaps the man who had betrayed him, fastened to the other end of his chain.

"I am bound now and forever to this dangerous and perfidious creature," she thought. "I am no longer my own mis-

treasure; I belong to her. When she commands, I must obey. I must be the slave of her every caprice—and she has forty years of humiliation and servitude to avenge.”

The prospect of such a life made her tremble; and she racked her brain to discover some way of freeing herself from her detested companion.

Would it be possible to inspire Aunt Medea with a desire to live independently in her own house, served by her own servants?

Might she succeed in persuading this silly old woman, who still longed for finery and ball-dresses, to marry? A handsome marriage-portion will always attract a husband.

But, in either case, Blanche would require money—a large sum of money, for whose use she would be accountable to no one.

This conviction made her resolve to take possession of about two hundred and fifty thousand francs, in bank-notes and coin, belonging to her father.

This sum represented the savings of the Marquis de Courtornieu during the past three years. No one knew he had laid it aside, except his daughter; and now that he had lost his reason, Blanche, who knew where the hoard was concealed, could take it for her own use without the slightest danger.

“With this,” she thought, “I can at any moment enrich Aunt Medea without having recourse to Martial.”

After this little scene there was a constant interchange of delicate attentions and touching devotion between the two ladies. It was “my dearest little aunt,” and “my dearly beloved niece,” from morning until night; and the gossips of the neighbourhood, who had often commented upon the haughty disdain which Mme. Blanche displayed in her treatment of her relative, would have found abundant food for comment had they known that Aunt Medea was protected from the possibility of cold by a mantle lined with costly fur, exactly like the marquise’s own, and that she made the journey, not in the large Berlin, with the servants, but in the post-chaise with the Marquis and Marquise de Sairmeuse.

The change was so marked that even Martial remarked it, and as soon as he found himself alone with his wife, he exclaimed, in a tone of good-natured railery:

“What is the meaning of all this devotion? We shall finish by encasing this precious aunt in cotton, shall we not?”

Blanche trembled, and flushed a little.

“I love good Aunt Medea so much!” said she. “I never can forget all the affection and devotion she lavished upon me when I was so unhappy.”

It was such a plausible explanation that Martial took no further notice of the matter, for his mind just then was fully occupied.

The agent, whom he had sent to Paris in advance, to purchase, if possible, the Hôtel de Sairmeuse, had written him to make all possible haste, as there was some difficulty about concluding the bargain.

“Plague take the fellow!” said the marquis, angrily, on receiving this news. “He is quite stupid enough to let this opportunity, for which we have been waiting ten years, slip through his fingers. I shall find no pleasure in Paris if I cannot own our old residence.”

He was so impatient to reach Paris that, on the second day of their journey, he declared if he were alone he would travel all night.

“Do so now,” said Blanche, graciously; “I do not feel fatigued in the least, and a night of travel does not appall me.”

They did travel all night, and the next day, about nine o’clock, they alighted at the Hôtel Meurice.

Martial scarcely took time to eat his breakfast.

“I must go and see my agent at once,” he said, as he hurried off. “I will soon be back.”

He reappeared in about two hours, pleased and radiant.

“My agent was a simpleton,” he exclaimed. “He was afraid to write me that a man, upon whom the conclusion of the sale depends, demands a bonus of fifty thousand francs. He shall have it in welcome.”

Then, in a tone of gallantry, which he always used in addressing his wife, he said:

“It only remains for me to sign the paper; but I will not do so unless the house suits you. If you are not too tired, I would like you to visit it at once. Time presses, and we have many competitors.”

This visit was, of course, one of pure form; but Mme. Blanche would have been hard to please if she had not been satisfied with this mansion, one of the most magnificent in Paris, with an entrance on the Rue de Grenelle, and large gardens shaded with superb trees, and extending to the Rue de Varennes.

Unfortunately, this superb dwelling had not been occupied for several years, and required many repairs.

"It will take at least six months to restore it," said Martial; "perhaps more. It is true that they might in three months, perhaps, render a portion of it very comfortable."

"It would be living in one's own house, at least," approved Blanche, divining her husband's wishes.

"Ah! then you agree with me! In that case, you may rest assured that I will expedite matters as much as possible."

In spite, or rather by reason of his immense fortune, the Marquis de Sairmeuse knew that a person is never so well, nor so quickly served, as when he serves himself, so he resolved to take the matter into his own hands. He conferred with architects, interviewed contractors, and hurried on the workmen.

As soon as he was up in the morning

he started out without waiting for breakfast, and seldom returned until dinner.

Although Blanche was compelled to pass most of her time within doors, on account of the bad weather, she was not inclined to complain. Her journey, the unaccustomed sights and sounds of Paris, the novelty of life in an urban mansion all combined to distract her thoughts from herself. She forgot her fears; a sort of haze enveloped the terrible scene at the Borderie; the clamours of conscience sank into faint whispers.

The past seemed fading away, and she was beginning to entertain hopes of a new and better life, when one day a servant entered, and said:

"There is a man below who wishes to speak with Madame."

(To be concluded)



Miracles

By WALT WHITMAN

WHY, who makes much of a miracle?

As to me, I know of nothing else but miracles,
Whether I walk the streets of Manhattan,
Or dart my sight over the roofs of houses toward the sky,
Or wade with naked feet along the beach just in the edge of the water,
Or stand under trees in the woods,
Or talk by day with anyone I love, or sleep in the bed at night with anyone I love,
Or sit at table at dinner with the rest,
Or look at strangers opposite me riding in the car,
Or watch honey-bees busy around the hive of a summer forenoon,
Or animals feeding in the fields,
Or birds, or the wonderfulness of insects in the air,
Or the wonderfulness of sundown, or of stars shining so quiet and bright,
Or the exquisite thin curve of the new moon in spring;
These with the rest, one and all are to me miracles,
The whole referring, yet each distinct and in its place.
To me every hour of the light and dark is a miracle,
Every cubic inch of space is a miracle.
Every square yard of the surface of the earth is spread with the same,
Every foot of the interior swarms with the same.

To me the sea is a continual miracle,
The fishes that swim—the rocks—the motion of the waves—the ships with men in them,
What stranger miracles are there?



"I'm the first Lord in the
youngest States of A mercury
Now of Newburyport it is the
voice of the people and I can't
help it"

Successful Americans

Lord Timothy Dexter

Tells How He Made a Fortune
and Made Himself a Lord

HOW Did Dexter make his Money
ye says bying whale bone for
staing for ships in grosing
three houndred & 40 tons—bort
all in boston salum and all in

Noue york under Cover oppenly told them
for my ships they all laffed so I had at my
oan pris I had four Counning men for
Rounners they found the horne as I told
them to act the fool I was full of Cash I
had nine tun of silver on hand at that
time—all that time the Creators more or
less laffing it spread very fast here is the
Rub—in fifty days they smelt a Rat—

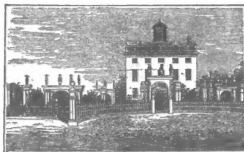
gone to Noubry
Port—spekkelaters
swarmed like hell
houns—to be short
with it I made
seventey five per
sent—one tun and
halfe of silver on
hand and over—one
more spect—Drole
a Nuf—I Dreamed
of worming pans
three nites that they
would doue in the
west inges I got no
more than forty
two thousand—put them in nine vessels for
difrent ports that tuck good hold I cleared
sevinty nine per sent the pans they made
yous of them for Coucking—very good
masser for Coukey—blessed good in Deade

missey got nise handel Now burn my fase
the best thing I Ever see in borne days I
found I was very lucky in spekkelation. I
Dreamed that the good book was Run Down
in this Country nine years gone so low as
halfe prise and Dull at that—the bibel I
means I had the Ready Cash by holl sale I
bort twelve per sent under halfe pris thay
Cost forty one sents Each bibbel—twenty
one thousand—I put them into twenty
one vessels for the west inges and sent a
text that all of them must have one bibel
in every familey or if not they would goue
to hell—and if they had Dun wiked flie to the

bibel and on thare
Neas and kiss the
bibel three times and
look up to heaven
annest for forgivnes
my Cappteins all had
Compleat orders—
here Coms the good
luck I made one
hundred per sent &
littel over then I
found I had made
money anuf I hant
speck alated sence
old time by govern-
ment securities I
made or cleared

forty seven thousands Dolors—that is
the old afare Now I toald the all the
sekrett Now be still let me A lone Dont
wonder Noe more houe I got my money
boaz A Pickle for the Knowing Ones.

LORD TIMOTHY DEXTER.



THE LORD TIMOTHY DEXTER MANSION

The "mouserum" with its "45 figures two leged and
fore Leged"



H I L L T O P



IN THE glow of youth
I there were times every
now and then when I felt
the necessity of a strong in-

spiration of soul-thought. My heart was dusty, parched for the want of the rain of deep feeling; my mind arid and dry,—for there is a dust which settles on the heart as well as that which falls on a ledge. . . . I felt eager to throw it off like heavy clothing, to drink deeply once more at the fresh fountain of life. . . . There was a hill to which I used to resort at such periods. . . .

I was utterly alone with the sun and the earth. Lying down on the grass, I spoke in my soul to the earth, the sun, the air, and the distant sea far beyond sight. I thought of the earth's firmness—I felt it bear me up; through the grassy couch there came an influence as if I could feel the great earth speaking to me. I thought of the wandering air—its pureness, which is its beauty: the air touched me and gave me something of itself. I spoke to the sea;—though so far, in my mind I saw it green at the rim of the earth and blue in deeper ocean;—I desired to have its strength, its mystery and glory. Then I addressed the sun, desiring the soul-equivalent of his light and brilliance, his endurance and unwearied race. . . . The rich blue of the unattainable flower of the sky drew my soul toward it, and there it rested; for pure colour is rest of heart.

By all these I prayed: I felt an emotion of the soul beyond all definition. . . . By the blue heaven, by the rolling sun bursting through untrodden space, a new ocean of ether is every day unveiled. By the fresh and wandering air encompassing the world; by the sea sounding on the shore—the green

sea white-flecked at the margin, and the deep ocean; by the strong earth under me.

Then returning, I prayed by the sweet thyme, whose little flowers I touched with my hand; by the slender grass; by the crumble of dry, chalky earth I took up and let fall through my fingers. Touching the crumble of earth, the blade of grass, the thyme flower; breathing the earth-encircling air; thinking of the sea and the sky, holding out my hand for the sunbeams to touch it, prone on the sward in token of deep reverence,—thus I prayed that I might touch to the unutterable existence infinitely higher than Deity. . . .

I prayed with the glowing clouds of sunset, and the soft light of the first star coming through the violet sky. At night, with the stars according to the season: now with the Pleiades, now with the Swan, or burning Sirius, and broad Orion's whole constellation, red Aldebaran, Arcturus, and the Northern Crown; with the morning star, the light-bringer, once now and then when I saw it, a white-gold ball in the violet-purple sky, or framed about with pale summer vapour, floating away as red streaks shot horizontally in the east. A diffused saffron ascended into the luminous upper azure. The disk of the sun rose over the hill; fluctuating with throbs of light, his chest heaved in fervour of brilliance. All the glory of the sunrise filled me with broader and furnace-like vehemence of prayer that I might have the deepest of soul-life, the deepest of all, deeper far than all this greatness of the visible universe and even of the invisible; that I might have a fullness of soul till now unknown, and utterly beyond my own conception.

RICHARD JEFFERIES.



1 In the evening my wife and I to walk in the garden and there scolded a little, I being doubtful that she had received a couple of fine pinnars (one of point de Geane) which I feared she hath from some one or other as a present; but on the contrary I find that she hath bought them for me to pay for them, without my knowledge. This do displease me much; but yet do so much please me better than if she had received them the other way, that I was not much angry but fell to other discourse.

PEPYS.

2 Will no one endeavour to understand affection without joining thereto a notion of possession and despotism?

DE MAUPASSANT.

3 The urbane activity with which a man receives money is really marvelous, considering that we so earnestly believe money to be the root of all earthly ills, and that on no account can a monied man enter heaven. Ah! how cheerfully we consign ourselves to perdition.

MELVILLE.

4 Let a confidence enter your mind that all women may be won—do you only lay your toils.

OVID.

5 Remember how Nature hath rampired up (as it were) the tongue, with teeth, lips, yea and hair without the lips, and all betokening reins or bridles, for the loose use of that member.

SIR HENRY SIDNEY.

6 If then at first wise Nature had, Made women either good or bad, Then some we might hate, and some choose;

But since she did them so create, That we may neither love, nor hate, Only this rests, all all may use.

DONNE.

7 One may imagine the desert, the pyramids, the Sphinx, without ever having seen them; but what one can not imagine is the expression of a Turkish barber squatting before his door. FLAUBERT.

8 Man is the only animal that can remain on friendly terms with the victims he intends to eat until he eats them.

SAMUEL BUTLER.

9 *Dresden, 1800.* Lady Hamilton expressed great anxiety to go to court, and Mrs. Eliot assured her it would not amuse her, and that the Elector never gave dinners or suppers. "What!" cried she, "no guttling!"

Diary of Mrs. Colonel St. George.

10 Since there is excitement In suffering for a woman, Let him burn on. The dust in a wolf's eyes Is balm of flowers to the wolf When a flock of sheep has raised it.

Arabic (MATHERS).

11 If your Hawk be so fond of the Man, that she will not fly from him but after a stroak or two return to him again; you must then but seldome be familiar with her.

MARKHAM.

12 Not to me is the setting of the Pleiads fearful, nor the wave howling around the rugged rock, nor when the wide heaven is light'ning do I fear, as I do a bad man, and water-drinkers, who remember what is spoken.

ANTIPATER.

13 A clumsy foot and ankle seems to presage a heavy and bad-shaped leg. This rule may not always be just, but there is no getting such an association out of a gentleman's mind.

Arts of Beauty. LOLA MONTEZ.

14 Religion is passing away, but she is leaving us the most ill-favoured and tyrannical of her daughters: the hideous sense of shame . . . The sense of shame is an attitude, a part of the code for the body; modesty is the mastery of the soul.

ANATOLE FRANCE (BROUSSON).

15 Very far from your eyes My loving eyes regard The sky of stars. Ah, that the moon might be Changed to a mirror.

JAPANESE (MATHERS)

september.

16 *From Vienna, September 16, 1590.*
The lady of high rank who was possessed of the devil was exorcised yesterday in the Schottenkirche and thereafter became quite a reasonable creature.

Fugger News Letters.

17 *(On the American Canal boat).* I was much alarmed on looking upward, to see, by the shape of his half-yard of sacking (which his weight had bent into an exceedingly tight bag), that there was a very heavy gentleman above me, whom the slender cords seemed quite incapable of holding; and I could not help reflecting upon the grief of my wife and family in the event of his coming down in the night.

DICKENS.

18 Every man has a right to utter what he thinks truth, and every other man has a right to knock him down for it.

DR. JOHNSON.

19 When a man asked him if he thought the soul was immortal, Demonax said: "Yes, but not more so than everything else."

LUCIAN.

20 All corporeal defects irritate me, and the want of beauty in women, being something which ought not to exist, shocks me like a tear, a solecism, a dissonance, a spot of ink—in short, like something out of order. On the other hand, beauty restores and fortifies me like some miraculous food like Olympian ambrosia.

AMIEL.

21 Mrs. West . . . is a great prude, having but two lovers at a time—one for use and the other for show.

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU.

22 Life—give me life until the end,
That at the very top of being,
The battle-spirit shouting in my blood,
Out of the reddest hell of the fight
I may be snatched and flung
Into the everlasting lull,
The immortal, incommu-
nicable dream. HENLEY.

23 It is impossible to feel affection beyond 78° or below 20° of Fahrenheit.

SYDNEY SMITH.

24 Women have, commonly, a very positive moral sense; that which they will, is right; that which they reject, is wrong; and their will, in most cases, ends by settling the moral.

HENRY ADAMS.

25 The ass is much better adapted than the horse to show off a lady;—her beauty is not so likely to be eclipsed.

MRS. BARBAULD.

26 Had there been a literary censorship in Rome, we should have had to-day neither Horace, Juvenal, nor the philosophical works of Cicero.

VOLTAIRE.

27 To any locomotive man there are three or four deadheads clinging, as if they conferred a great favour on society by living upon it. Meanwhile, they fill the churches, and die and revive from time to time. They have nothing to do but sin and repent of their sins. How can you expect such bloodsuckers to be happy?

THOREAU.

28 If you want to know delight
Run naked in an autumn night.

MASEFIELD.

29 That refined degree of Platonic affection which is absolutely detached from the flesh, and is, indeed, entirely and purely spiritual, is a gift confined to the female part of the creation; many of whom I have heard declare (and, doubtless, with great truth) that they would with the utmost readiness, resign a lover to a rival, when such resignation was proved to be necessary for the temporal interest of the lover. Hence, therefore, I conclude that this affection is in nature, though I cannot pretend to say I have ever seen an instance of it.

FIELDING.

30 Eat, drink, and play, and think
that this is bliss:

There is no heaven but this;

There is no hell,
Save earth, which serves the purpose
doubly well. ARTHUR A. CLOUGH.

september.